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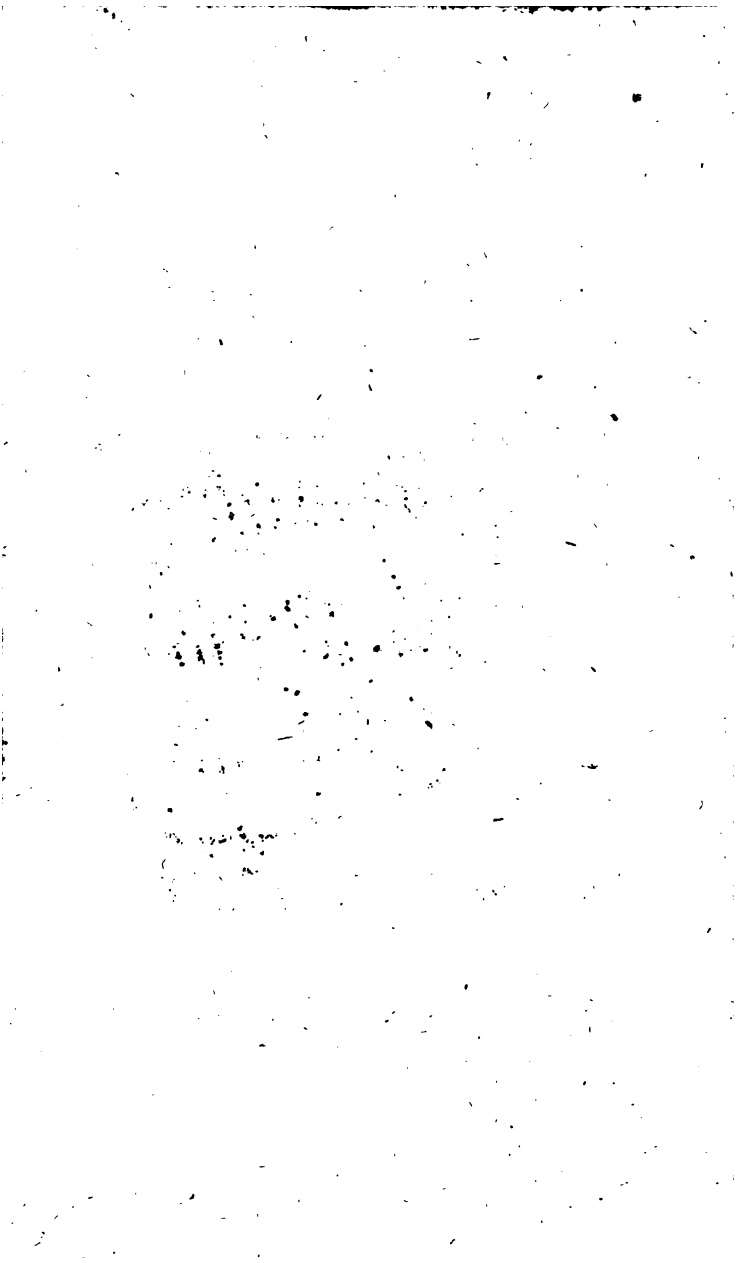

Hamilton, Elizabeth

MEMOIRS

OF

MODERN PHILOSOPHERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

"Ridiculum acri
" Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res."
HOR.

" Ridicule shall frequently prevail,
" And cut the knot, when graver reasons fail."
FRANCIS.

DUBLIN:

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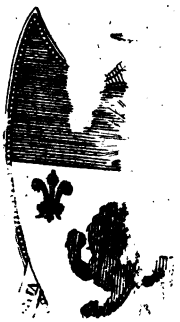

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CHAP. I.

"With too much thinking to have common thought."
POPE.

WHEN Bridgetina returned to the parlour, and found that Henry had departed without taking leave of her, ſhe was beyond meaſure diſconcerted. She had the day before received from Mr. Glib a new novel, the declamatory ſtile and quaint phraſeology of which had ſo highly pleaſed her, that anxious to dreſs her thoughts on the preſent occaſion to the very beſt advantage, ſhe had retired to refreſh her memory with a few of the moſt ſtriking paſſages; ſhe now returned fraught with three long ſpeeches, ſo ardent, ſo expreſſive, ſo full of energy and emphaſis, that it would have grieved a ſaint to have had them loſt.

"And is he gone?" cried ſhe, in a voice that at once denoted her ſurpriſe and mortification. "Was his ſenſibility too great to bear the ſad—ſad ſcene of ſeparation? It was not his own feelings but mine, of which he was thus tender. Ah! the delightful exceſs of morbid ſenſibility!"

Julia, perceiving the aſtoniſhment of Mr. Gubbles, felt very much aſhamed; and afraid leſt Bridgetina ſhould ſtill further expoſe herſelf, begged her, in a whiſper, to ſay no more upon the

ſubject at preſent, as they ſhould have an opportunity of talking it all over when they were alone.

"I know your meaning," replied Bridgetina aloud, "You would have me baſely conceal my ſentiments, in conformity to the pernicious maxims and practices of the world. But what ſo much as the dread of cenſure has cramped the energy of the female mind? Have not the firſt of female characters deſpiſed it? And do you think the odious fetters of a depraved ſociety ſhall ſhackle me?"

'Indeed, Miſs Botherim,' ſaid Mr. Gubbles, "I muſt make bold to tell you, that if you mean, (for I cannot pretend to ſay that I very well underſtand you) but if you mean to ſay, that you intend to be above the cenſures of the world, I can aſſure you I never knew any good come of ſuch notions.'

"What are the cenſures of the world to me?" ſaid Bridgetina. "Do you think I have not ſufficient philoſophy to deſpiſe them?"

'Well, well,' returned Mr. Gubbles, 'I hope it will not be your caſe, Miſs; but I muſt needs ſay, that in the long courſe of my practice, I never knew any one that began in deſpiſing the cenſures of the world, that did not conclude in deſerving them.'

Mr. Gubbles then took his leave, and was no ſooner gone, than Bridgetina informed Julia of her intention of following Henry to London. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Julia, "you cannot, ſurely, be ſo very imprudent as to harbour a deſign of this ſort now? Think of the conſequences to your character. Think of the diſtreſs of your mother! Nay, to Henry himſelf ſuch a circumſtance could not fail at preſent to be inconvenient and diſtreſſing to the laſt degree."

'To

'To anſwer your objections methodically,' ſaid Bridgetina, '(for you know I love to methodize) they are, I think, threefold. Firſt, with regard to my character; ſecondly, in reſpect to my mother; and thirdly, in reſpect to Henry himſelf. Theſe are your objections; they may all, however, be anſwered in one word—*general utility*. What is the uſe of character to an individual, when put in competition with the intereſts of general utility? By what moral tie am I bound to conſult the inclinations of my mother? The only juſt morals are thoſe which tend to increaſe the bulk of enjoyment: my enjoyment can never be increaſed by living with my mother, conſequently living with her is adverſe to the grand end of exiſtence—general utility. As to Henry, will not my preſence increaſe his happineſs? And is not happineſs and pleaſure the only true end of our being?* When we attain theſe, do we not then beſt promote general utility? Theſe are the ſublime principles of philoſophy, and all that oppoſes it is the fable of ſuperſtition.'

"But I am not convinced, that by following Henry to London, before he has had time to arrange his affairs, or even to enter upon the profeſſion on which he depends for his ſupport, that you will contribute either to his happineſs or your own," ſaid Julia.

'What obſtinacy of prejudice!' cried Bridgetina. 'Was not melancholy painted upon his countenance? Was not his miſery, at the thoughts of leaving me, evident to the moſt careleſs obſerver? And ſhall not his happineſs at again beholding me be equally apparent? Yes; I feel in myſelf a capacity for encreaſing his happineſs, and my powers ſhall not be loſt. Our ſouls ſhall

* See Emma Courtney.

mingle, our ideas ſhall expand together. Senſations! emotions! delicacies! ſenſibilities! O how ſhall ye overwhelm us in one great torrent of felicity!'

"Still," ſaid Julia, "I wiſh—indeed, my dear Bridgetina, I wiſh—that with regard to Henry, you may not labour under ſome miſtake. Forgive me, but I think it would be wrong to conceal from you, that I have ſtill ſome doubts—"

'Doubts! after what you have heard him ſay?' cried Bridgetina, interrupting her. 'Was ever declaration more explicit? Was ever confeſſion more ſweetly candid or ſincere?'

"He did indeed confeſs that he was in love with ſomebody," returned Julia; "but as he ſpoke in the firſt perſon, the object of his paſſion might, I think, be with greater probability ſuppoſed abſent than preſent."

The rage of Bridgetina, at a ſuppoſition ſo injurious to her wiſhes, and ſo deſtructive of her hopes, was for ſome time too great for utterance. She at length, however, gave vent to her wrath, and loaded poor Julia with the bitterest reproaches, mixed with many ſarcaſtic obſervations on her want of penetration. Julia was at great pains to appeaſe her, in which ſhe at length happily ſucceeded; and though ſhe could by no means prevail upon her to relinquiſh the plan of following Henry to London, ſhe extorted from her a promiſe of delay.

Bridgetina then entered into a very long, and doubtleſs a very inſtructive, inveſtigation of the nature of mind; proving, by a thouſand irrefragable arguments, the utter impoſſibility of Henry's having continued inſenſible to the charms of her mental qualifications; and concluded her oration by an obſervation ſo full of novelty and wiſdom, that

that it alone were ſufficient to immortalize her name. 'Having proved,' ſaid ſhe, 'that mind is ſuperior to matter, and never more ſuperior than when the faculties are in the full vigour of youth, it neceſſarily follows, that were man, uncorrupted by the prejudices of ſociety, to act from the pure impulſe of nature, he would, in the wild career of energetic youth, deſpiſe the trifling diſadvantages of uglineſs and decrepitude. Regardleſs of the mere forms of matter, he would leave the unnatural admiration of beauty to the old, the dull, and the inſenſible; and ſeek for the object of his affection a diſcuſſing, a reaſoning, an inveſtigating mind. This is the true courſe of nature! This is the moſt ſublime proof of the perfectibility of man!"

CHAP. II.

"Alike in ignorance, his reaſon ſuch,
"Whether he thinks too little or too much;
"Chaos of thought and paſſion, all confus'd,
"Still by himſelf abus'd, or diſabus'd."

POPE.

JULIA was now ſo far recovered, as to be able to walk acroſs the room with very little help. She could ſit up the whole day, without experiencing any inconvenience; and, certain that ſhe could well bear the motion of a carriage, ſhe would no longer have delayed her removal to her father's houſe, had it not been for the earneſt intreaties of Vallaton.

She aſked him, with a ſmile, if any thing was to prevent his ſeeing her there as frequently as he did in her preſent ſituation? "Alas!" returned Vallaton, "I may, indeed, have there the pleaſure of beholding you, of hearing the muſic of your voice; but can I pour out my ſoul to you in the preſence of your father, as I do now in this bleſſed retirement? Ah! deareſt Julia, do not ſo ſoon deprive me of the exquiſite happineſs I have of late enjoyed. If you have any regard for me, you will not heſitate to prolong the period of my felicity."

Julia, who was herſelf too happy in the uninterrupted enjoyment of her lover's converſation to be very ſolicitous of change, conſented to remain for ſome days longer. Meantime the ſky brightened up, the ſun again ſhone forth, the floods abated, and Vallaton on his next viſit brought ſuch an account of the dryneſs of the road, as induced Bridgetina, who was all impatience to learn ſome tidings of the young phyſician, to propoſe walking to her mother's, leaving Vallaton *tête à tête* with Julia, till her return. Her propoſal met with no oppoſition from either of the parties, and ſhe immediately ſet out.

By inceſſantly ruminating on her own ſituation, ſhe had worked her mind into a ſtate of effervescence, whoſe airy fumes ſo completely filled the light balloon of fancy, that judgment and common-ſenſe (like the adventurous brothers* of aeroſtatic memory) ſuffered themſelves to be carried along by its wild career.

Full of diſtinguiſhing herſelf by ſome bold ſtep that ſhould immortalize her fame, ſhe walked on

with

* Stephen and Joſeph Montgolfier.

with precipitation, unheedful of every object, careleſs of every obſerver; ſometimes ſtopping to make a ſoliloquy, ſometimes trotting along as faſt as the ſhortneſs of her legs would permit; till, when about half-way to the town, ſhe was ſtopped by Mrs. Delmond, who was thus far on her road to viſit Julia. Mrs. Delmond was ſurpriſed by ſeeing her, and immediately enquired for her daughter. Bridgetina only ſtayed to ſay that ſhe would find Julia very well; and then, careleſs of Mrs. Delmond's intreaties that ſhe would be ſo good as to take up her gown, which trailed after her upon the dirty road, ſhe ſet off with redoubled ſpeed.

A few ſteps from her mother's door ſhe was met by Mr. Glib. "How d'ye do, citizen, Miſs?" cried he, as ſoon as he obſerved her. "Exerting your energies, I ſee. That's it! energies do all. Make your legs grow long in a twinkling. Won't then ſweep ſtreets with your gown. All owing to this d****d good-for-nothing ſtate of civilization. No ſhort legs in an enlightened ſociety. All the Hottentots tall and ſtrait as May-poles."

'Certainly,' ſaid Bridgetina, bridling, 'if a perſon of energetic mind chooſes to be tall, there is nothing to hinder it; mind, we all know, being deſpotic over matter; but I ſee no good in being tall, for my ſhare, and would much rather remain as I am.'

"As you are, Miſs?" cried Glib, grinning. "No, no; change your mind, when you get among the Gonoquais. Grand ſcheme goes bravely on. Four new philoſophers agreed to go already. Nothing at our houſe but preparation. Shut up ſhop to-morrow. Ship to be freighted ſoon. Only want the caſh. Philoſo-

phers all ſadly out at elbows. Depend on you for five hundred."

'Yes,' replied Bridgetina, 'and I hope to bring an acquiſition to the party of more real value than fifty times five hundred." She had now reached her mother's door, but finding her not at home, ſhe proceeded without delay to the houſe of Mr. Sydney.

Maria was at home, and alone; her ſpirits dejected by parting with her brother, who had ever been the object of her fondeſt affection—an affection now encreaſed by the ſtronger ties of tender friendſhip, unbounded confidence, and exalted eſteem. She would willingly have been excuſed from the painful taſk of talking on common topics with ſuch viſitors as chance might ſend her, at a time when her full heart was occupied by its own feelings; but as ſhe had early learned too great a reſpect for truth to command a domeſtic to commit a breach of it, ſhe did not aſſume the privilege of being denied. Nor did ſhe, like ſome pretenders to ſanctity, make amends to herſelf for the ſelf-denial practiſed in one inſtance, by the indulgence of peeviſhneſs or ill-humour in another; but repreſſing her mortification at being thus unſeaſonably diſturbed, ſhe received our heroine, if not with the diſſembled ſmile of pleaſure, with the urbanity of real hoſpitality.

Bridgetina inſtantly enquired for Henry. When ſhe heard that he had ſet off early in the morning, ſhe burſt into an exclamation of ſorrow. "And is he gone?" cried ſhe. "Gone, without one tender adieu? Cruel Henry! why didſt thou thus leave me? why deny me the delicious agony of a parting embrace? But thy feelings were too much awakened! thy manly ſoul ſtruggled with the

the ſuffocating ſenſations of ſorrowing ſenſibility! Tell me, Maria! tell me, I conjure you, every word he ſaid. Did he not murmur at his cruel fate? did he not ſigh? did he not appear extremely wretched?"

'If you mean my brother,' ſaid Maria, 'it cannot be doubted that he was very ſorry to part with us. He has too much feeling to leave his friends with indifference.'

"Feeling!" cried Bridgetina, "Oh, he is all feeling, all ſenſibility, and ſoftneſs, and intereſting melancholy. But grieve not for him, Maria; ſoon ſhall I ſoothe his ſorrows with the tender aſſiduity of unſophiſticated and affective love; ſoon will I claſp him to my throbbing boſom; ſoon—"

'Indeed, Miſs Botherim,' ſaid Maria, 'you talk very wildly. I ſuppoſe you mean to rally me for my dejection; but indeed, this is not the way to increaſe my ſpirits.'

"Has your brother then not told you of our loves?"

'Why, my dear Miſs Botherim, will you perſiſt in this abſurd way of ſpeaking? Indeed it is not kind; my ſpirits are by no means equal to it.'

"Why will you perſiſt," returned Bridgetina, "in believing me not to be ſerious? Never was I more ſo, I do aſſure you, in my life. Henry was wrong in concealing from you his long and tender attachment; but ſince upon the formation of our firſt attachment depends the colour of our future life, happy may you be that exiſting circumſtances led him to ſuch an object. Yes, Maria, rejoice that your brother loves one who glories in returning his tenderneſs; who, with inexpreſſible yearnings, pants to convince

him

him of the power he has obtained over her heart."

'For heaven's ſake,' cried Maria, 'to what do you allude? To whom is my brother thus attached? How did you come by his confidence?'

"To whom is your brother attached?" repeated Bridgetina; "to whom ſhould he poſſibly be attached, but to me? Yes; long the fierce conſuming fire has flamed in ſecret; nor till yeſterday morning did it get vent in the dear intereſting channel of a full explanation. Oh, Maria, how did our ſouls then mingle! how delicious was the ſympathetic tenderneſs that heaved our throbbing hearts!"

Amazed, yet doubting, Maria ſtared upon Bridgetina; at length, recovering herſelf, 'I ſee, Miſs Botherim,' ſaid ſhe gravely, 'you have a mind to amuſe yourſelf by an experiment upon my credulity; but I am not ſo eaſily deceived. Believe me, we have had enough of this fooliſh converſation, and had better change the ſubject.'

Bridgetina, much offended at a ſpeech which inſinuated a doubt of her being the object of Henry's affection, retorted with ſome warmth; and by a minute detail of the converſation that had taken place the preceding day, laboured to enforce the conviction, while ſhe increaſed the aſtoniſhment of his ſiſter.

In repeating what had been ſaid by Henry, Bridgetina followed the method obſerved by many worthy people, who, from a benevolent deſire of making whatever they recount appear to the beſt advantage, take the trouble of tranſlating every ſentence into their own language, and thus kindly beſtow upon their friends their own peculiar turn of expreſſion. So effectually, in the preſent inſtance, did Bridgetina purſue this admirable

mirable plan, that ſhe made the declaration of Henry appear, even to the prejudiced mind of his ſiſter, as full and unequivocal as it had done to her own. Every word ſhe uttered filled the breaſt of Maria with an increaſing portion of aſtoniſhment and diſmay.

That Henry, the brother in whom her hopes were fondly centered; he, to whom, in her opinion, belonged all excellence and perfection; whoſe ſentiments were ſo delicate, whoſe obſervation was ſo penetrating; that *he* ſhould make choice of ſuch a woman as Miſs Botherim! It was equal ſubject of mortification and amazement! Yet when ſhe conſidered the evident perturbation of his mind, when ſhe recollected how anxiouſly he had ſought for an opportunity of ſpeaking to her unobſerved by their father, which many little croſs accidents had interpoſed to prevent; and that he had been forced to depart without an opportunity of communicating to her what ſeemed to hang ſo heavy on his mind; the recollection ſeemed to confirm the truth of the extraordinary tale. Bridgetina proceeded to mention her intention of immediately following Henry to London, and taking out her tablet, deſired his addreſs.

"Impoſſible!" cried Maria, reddening with vexation; "It is impoſſible you can be ſo ridiculous as to harbour a thought of following my brother to London."

"I not only think of it," returned Bridgetina, 'but am determined upon going. You, my dear, who are the child of prejudice and ſuperſtition, would, perhaps, ſtartle at the idea of following a lover. You have not ſtrength of mind to devote yourſelf to that *moral martyrdom* which every female, who enters upon the grand path of true philoſophy,

philoſophy, muſt, in this depraved and corrupt ſtate of civilization, be certain to encounter.'

"Indeed, indeed, Miſs Botherim, theſe fine theories do very well to talk about," returned Maria; "but believe me, they were never meant for practice. Think but for a moment on the conſequences that muſt enſue both to yourſelf and my brother, from perſiſting in a project ſo wild—ſo ridiculous. And I am ſure you have too much ſenſe to proceed any farther in a ſcheme that muſt bring ruin to you both."

'My ſcheme,' ſaid Bridgetina, 'is too extenſive for any but a mind of great powers to comprehend. It is not bounded by the narrow limits of individual happineſs, but extends to embrace the grand object of general utility. Your education has been too confined to enable you to follow an energetic mind in which paſſions generate powers, and powers generate paſſions; and powers, paſſions, and energies, germinate to general uſefulneſs. I ſee you do not underſtand this; it is, indeed, beyond the comprehenſion of a vulgar mind; but when I have more leiſure I ſhall be happy to enter with you into an inveſtigation of the ſubject. As I know the addreſs of Mrs. Fielding, it is of little conſequence whether I have your brother's or not; ſo good-bye!"

"Do not go, I beſeech you," cried Maria, "do not go, dear Miſs Botherim, till I talk to you a little further upon this ſubject. You would not, ſure you would not wiſh to injure the intereſts of my brother, whoſe principal dependence is on the friendſhip of Mrs. Fielding. What would ſhe think of ſeeing a lady come after him to London? What could ſhe think, that would not be injurious to the honour and character of both?"

'If

'If ſhe be a perſon of ſuch vulgar prejudices, her opinion is of little conſequence,' anſwered Bridgetina. 'But make yourſelf eaſy, Maria, I have for Henry a ſcheme of happineſs in view, which will make the friendſhip of Mrs. Fielding very immaterial.' So ſaying, Bridgetina hurried away without liſtening to any further expoſtulation, leaving poor Maria a prey to the moſt haraſſing perplexity and vexation.

Greatly ſhe now regretted the abſence of her father, who had gone to pay a viſit to a gentleman in the country, in order to procure from him an introduction to his numerous connections in London in favour of Henry; and as this gentman's houſe was ten miles diſtant from W ——, ſhe thought it probable he might not return till the following day. Upon this emergency, ſhe determined to conſult her friend Miſs Orwell; and if ſhe found that Bridgetina ſtill perſiſted in her extraordinary plan, reſolved to apply to Dr. Orwell himſelf for his interference; as his voice, ſhe thought, would be effectual for its prevention.

She inſtantly hurried to the parſonage, where ſhe found Harriet buſily employed in preparing baby-linen for the wife of a poor labourer who had that morning been brought to-bed of twins, and was altogether unprovided for this double demand upon her tiny wardrobe. The other children, whoſe noiſy prattle diſturbed the mother's repoſe, Harriet had brought home with her in the morning, and found their company very efficacious in driving away the troubleſome companion—*thought.*

She diſmiſſed her little gueſts on the entrance of Maria, whoſe countenance betrayed ſuch

ſymptoms

ſymptoms of agitation, that it ſtruck diſmay to her inmoſt ſoul. She took Maria's hand, and with faltering voice, enquired if any thing had befallen her. "Has your brother—has any accident—Oh! for heaven's ſake, ſpeak."

"My brother, I hope, is well," returned Maria; 'but he has loſt himſelf—has thrown himſelf away—has—Oh! Harriet, how ſhall I tell you? —he has engaged himſelf to Miſs Botherim.

"To Miſs Botherim!" repeated Harriet, ſtaring wildly upon Maria, whoſe feelings were now ſo overcome, that ſhe could no longer refrain from tears, but throwing her arms round her lovely friend, for ſome time wept in ſilence on her neck. Harriet, ſtupified by the information ſhe had received, made no attempt to interrupt her. Yet though tears are ſometimes it is ſaid infectious, not one found its way to the eyes of Harriet. She neither moved nor ſpake, till Maria, her voice half choaked in ſobs, exclaimed, O Harriet! the ſiſter of my heart, how often have I flattered myſelf that you, you were the object of my brother's love. You, indeed, were formed to make him happy—but Miſs Botherim! O what ſorcery has bewitched him?"

Whether it was the extreme tenderneſs of Maria's accent, as ſhe pronounced theſe words, that touched ſome uniſon in Harriet's, heart, or whether it was the words themſelves that ſtruck the chords of feeling, we know not; but they produced upon Harriet the inſtantaneous effect of ſympathy. She ſtrained Maria to her boſom, and mingled her tears with hers. After the firſt emotions of both had a little ſubſided, Maria proceeded fully to relate what ſhe had learned from Miſs Botherim, and by her relation, excited in

Harriet

Harriet feelings ſtill more poignant than thoſe ſhe had herſelf experienced.

Harriet had indeed ſtill more reaſon for aſtoniſhment: for though Henry had never talked to her of love, he had, by a long ſeries of minute and delicate attentions, given her ſuch unequivocal proofs of his partiality, that ſhe could as ſoon have entertained doubts of her own exiſtence as of the ſincerity of his affection. As Maria proceeded in her narration, a thouſand recollected proofs of tenderneſs ruſhed upon her mind. She remembered, too, how uneaſy he had ever appeared in the preſence of Miſs Botherim, for whom he ſeemed to entertain an unconquerable diſlike. Could this be affectation? Could it be a maſk to conceal his real ſentiments from obſervation? In any other inſtance Harriet would not have heſitated to have pronounced a firm negative to thoſe unworthy ſuſpicions. But where is the judgment which, under the influence of paſſion, can coolly exerciſe its undiminiſhed powers? Where the candour that jealouſy cannot bias? Where the firmneſs that ſuſpicion cannot ſhake?

" Such tricks hath ſtrong imagination,
" That if he would but apprehend ſome joy,
" *It* comprehends ſome tringer of that joy;
" Or in the night imagining ſome fear.
" How eaſy is a buſh ſuppoſed a bear?*

The entrance of Dr. Orwell and Marianne, put a ſtop to converſation, and reſtored to Harriet the liberty of ruminating in ſilence on the ſtrange event, which, in ſpite of all ſhe had heard, ſhe ſcarcely knew how to believe.

The Doctor ſpoke to Miſs Sidney of her brother,

* Shakeſpeare.

ther, in whoſe welfare he took the moſt ſincere and friendly intereſt. He talked of his journey, of his proſpects, of the probability of his ſucceſs in the capital; and mingled all he ſaid reſpecting him with ſuch diſcriminating, yet ardent praiſe, as would at any other time have kindled the flame of gratitude in the breaſts of more than one of his auditors. In the midſt of his panegyric, a loud knock at the door announcing the approach of a viſitor, Maria, who was in no ſpirits for ſeeing company, would have retired; but before ſhe could get away, Mrs. Botherim haſtily entered the room.

Breathleſs, pale, and trembling, the poor old lady ſunk into the chair that was offered her, and hiding her face with the corner of her cloak, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears. The ſight of age, venerable in itſelf, is doubly venerable in affliction. The hearts of theſe amiable young people bowed before it; and each, forgetful of her own particular ſorrow, turned her whole attention towards thoſe of the unhappy mother, the cauſe of whoſe diſtreſs they were at no loſs to conjecture.

"Oh! Dr. Orwell," cried ſhe, taking out her handkerchief to wipe away her tears; "you know what it is to be a parent, and will not wonder at what I feel, when I tell you that I have loſt my child! Yes, ſhe leaves me! ſhe deſerts me! In my old age ſhe forſakes me! She will make my grey hairs go with ſorrow to the grave!"

'Miſs Botherim about to leave you!' ſaid Dr. Orwell in aſtoniſhment, 'where is ſhe going? Does ſhe leave you for a huſband? If ſo, you know, my dear madam, it is what parents muſt lay their accounts with.'

"Oh! it is no ſuch thing as for a huſband," returned Mrs. Botherim; it is for madneſs, for ruin,

ruin, for misery! She says as how that young Dr. Sydney and she are going to live among the Hottentots. And Mr. Glib is going, and all them there philosophers are going. And this is what at last comes of all her fine larning, and all her argufications out of them there wise books. To run from her poor mother, and to go a harloting among the Hottentots! Oh! that I should ever live to see it!"

Much as Dr. Orwell was affected by the good lady's distress, at the mention of the Hottentots, he could not help smiling. A scheme so wild was, he thought, in no danger of being put in practice. 'Into what absurdities Mr. Glib or his friends may be led, I know not,' said he; 'but I think I can answer for Dr. Sydney, that his principles are built upon a rock, that gives security for the steadiness of his integrity and discretion.'

"Oh, you know nothing of him at all," returned Mrs Botherim. "Who would have thought that he had been all this time slily a courting o' my daughter, and 'ticing her to follow him to London, with no other view but to make her his concubine? For she told me to my face they were to live together without being married. Think of this, Dr. Orwell! think what a blow it is to my heart! oh, I shall never survive it."

'Depend upon it, Mrs. Botherim, there is some mistake in this,' rejoined the Doctor. 'That Doctor Sydney should take a fancy to Miss Botherim, as there is no accounting for tastes, is not impossible; but that he should be guilty of the arts of base seduction is so inconsistent with the whole tenor of his conduct, with the manly generosity of his sentiments, with the soundness of his principles, that it is utterly incredible. The best of men, it is true, act not at all times with consistency. By the impulse of sudden passion,

paſſion, all are liable to be ſometimes betrayed; but the tranſient erratic wanderings of a noble mind never reach the confines of baſeneſs. The man who entertains exalted conceptions of the Being to whom he believes himſelf accountable, is not likely to loſe the tranſcript of his image on his heart, by an act of deliberate perfidy and wickedneſs. Henry Sydney, I repeat it, is incapable of being the ſeducer of innocence."

Harriet graſped her father's hand; tears of gratitude and pleaſure gliſtened in her eyes. Her looks ſpoke more than words could have conveyed, and her approbation of his opinion was by no means indifferent to Dr. Orwell, who knew the generous warmth of her feelings, and highly eſteemed the ſoundneſs of her judgment.

"How greatly is my brother honoured by your eſteem, ſir," ſaid Maria, with great emotion; "but indeed you do not think more highly of him than he deſerves."

'I know not what he deſerves,' cried Mrs. Botherim; 'no, not I. If he takes away my daughter, he deſerves every thing that's bad; and I ſhould not have thought that any body would have given countenance to ſuch doings. My poor Biddy! little did I think what all her larning was to come to! Seeing my late dear Mr. Botherim conſider me as nobody, becauſe I was not book-read, I thought I would take care to prevent my daughter's meeting with ſuch diſreſpect from her huſband; and ſo I encouraged her in doing nothing but reading from morning till night. Proud was I when they told me ſhe was a philoſopher; for few women, you know, are philoſophers; and ſo I thought ſhe muſt ſurely be wiſer than all her ſex, and that all the men of ſenſe would be ſo fond of her! And to be ſure ſhe was fit to

talk

talk with e'er a judge or an archbiſhop in the kingdom; and often have I thought, that if ſome of them great wiſe men had but heard her—'

"If your daughter has gained the affections of ſuch a man as Henry Sydney," ſaid Dr. Orwell, interrupting her, "you have nothing to regret. In a ſon-in-law ſo ſuperior in talents, ſo unexceptionable in character, any reaſonable parent may rejoice."

'I don't ſay any thing to diſparage the young gentleman,' returned Mrs. Botherim; 'no, not I. And though I cannot ſay that I ſhould much have liked her marrying a diſſenter, (ſeeing that the late dear Mr. Botherim hated the very name o'em) yet I might have been brought to give my conſent to their lawful marriage, had he courted her for that purpoſe; but to think of his 'ticing her to leave her mother's houſe, without being married at all! I wonder how you can have the conſcience to take his part; it is not like a man of your cloth, Doctor; and what I ſhould never have believed of you.'

The Doctor explained, and juſtified his opinion of young Sydney by many ſtriking inſtances of noble and virtuous conduct, altogether incompatible with the crime alleged againſt him, and of which, for theſe reaſons, he perſiſted in believing him incapable.

'Ah!' cried Mrs. Botherim, ſhaking her head, 'you don't know what them there preſbyterians are capable of. The late dear Mr. Botherim uſed to ſay as how they were all as cunning and deceitful as Satan himſelf; and not one of them would he ſo much as ſpeak to; no, nor give a farthing to one of their beggars, though in ever ſo much need of it, becauſe it was encouraging a ſchiſm in the church; but the honour of the church was indeed

indeed ever next his heart. Poor dear gentleman! hard would it have been upon him, had he but known that he was to fall from his horſe at a diſſenter's door, and breathe his laſt in a diſſenter's houſe!'

"And can there, my dear madam, be any ſtronger argument againſt the entertainment of ſuch unchriſtian prejudices, than that which you have now adduced. The behaviour of Mr. Sydney, upon the unhappy occaſion you have mentioned, evinced him to be a true diſciple of the meek and forgiving JESUS; and from ſuch let not the vile partition of ſect or party ſeparate our hearts. The truly religious, the truly good, are children of one family, by whatever names they may be diſtinguiſhed. They ought, therefore, to love as brethren, to be united in affection; and, inſtead of harbouring the ſpirit of animoſity, to *bind faſt the bond of peace*. But where is Miſs Botherim? I ſhould like to have a little converſation with her, and perhaps may be able from it to procure you ſatisfaction."

"It was juſt for that, that I came," replied Mrs. Botherim. 'I wiſh you to come and ſpeak to her, and try if you can make her liſten to reaſon; for ſhe minds me no more than nothing at all. I may ſpeak, and ſpeak my heart out, all to no purpoſe; ſhe dumb-founds me in ſuch a way, by talking out of them there wiſe books, that I know not how to anſwer her. But you can ſpeak in print like herſelf. Do, then, good Doctor, come with me, and try to perſuade her paſt this vile notion of going to ſee them there Hottentots; and if ſhe will have Dr. Sydney, let her be but honeſtly married, and I won't contradict her. Indeed, I never contradicted her in my life: ſhe knows I did not, and it a'nt time to begin now.

Dr.

Dr. Orwell very readily agreed immediately to try the force of his arguments upon Bridgetina, and set out with Mrs. Botherim for her house, entertaining no doubt of his success.

CHAP. III.

" Assaying by his dev'lish arts to reach
" The organs of her fancy——Thence raise
" At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
" Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
" Blown up with high conceits, ingend'ring pride."
MILTON.

GREATLY to Mrs. Botherim's delight, and not a little to the satisfaction of Dr. Orwell, did they learn, from the servant who opened Mrs. Botherim's door, that Miss, fearful of being too late upon the road, had set out on her return to Miss Delmond. The Doctor had an easy task in convincing the fond mother, that her fears for the misconduct of her daughter were founded in mistake; and having soothed and quieted her mind, by his mild and ever-instructive conversation, he returned to his own house.

Bridgetina, mean time, inflamed by the opposition she had met with from her mother, and alarmed by a hint, that had dropt from her in the heat of argument, of detaining her by force, if reason could not prevail upon her to give up her extraordinary plan, resolved not to lose a moment's time in carrying it into effect. Instead of returning to Julia, she went directly to the house

houſe of Mr. Glib, from which ſhe could take the ſtage-coach the following morning; and having declared her intention to the philoſophers, whom ſhe found aſſembled in the back parlour, intreated their ſecrecy and aſſiſtance.

Her reſolution was applauded by Mr. Glib in terms of high encomium. 'What! haſt left old Poke-about for good and all?' cried he, rubbing his hands with an air of infinite ſatisfaction. 'Now that is ſomething excellent, indeed. Live with no one one does not like. Love no one but for what is in them. That's it! that's the way to perfectibility! What is it but loving one's own child, or one's own mother, or one's own wife, better than other people's, that obſtructs the progreſs of morals? Leave them all. Let them all ſhift for themſelves. Make them exert their energies. That's it! Bring on the age of reaſon in a twinkling. Warrant though, the old lady take on at a great rate. Poor ſoul! knows nothing of philoſophy. What is ſhe then good for?"

"Mrs. Botherim, indeed," ſaid Mr. Myope, "has a mind of ſuch limited powers, that ſhe cannot be expected to do much towards general utility; and ſhe has certainly no right to deprive the world of the vaſt advantages of Miſs Botherim's converſation and example; which, nevertheleſs, muſt have been in a great meaſure loſt to ſociety, if ſhe had continued to live immured in her houſe. When ſuch talents as hers are exerted in a wider field, and have the advantage of a happier ſoil and purer air, who can ſay how far they may extend, or what diſtant regions may not be meliorated by their fruits? To the event of Miſs Botherim's leaving her mamma, may the future Mandarins of China be indebted for their knowledge; and Tartars and Otaheitans, yet unborn, may from it experience, through channels

channels that will never be discovered, an incitement to their virtue."

Bridgetina had too much philanthropy in her nature, not to rejoice in the prospect of being so extensively useful; and pleased with the approbation of minds so congenial, she regarded herself with even more than usual complacency. Having procured a messenger from Mr. Glib's, she dispatched a short note to Julia, informing her "that the urgency of her affairs permitted her not to return to her again, but that she should hear from her as soon as she reached London; and in the mean time begged to have her things from the farm; which, as her mother had sent her three times more than there was the least occasion for, would serve her for some time after she went to town. Hoping that Julia would soon follow her example, she concluded with wishes for her happiness."

The situation of Julia, at the time this note arrived, was by no means an enviable one. The reader will recollect, that we left Mrs. Delmond on the road to the farm, where she soon after arrived. Her voice was heard by Julia, enquiring for her of the farmer, who was clipping the straggling plumage of a yew-tree peacock that grew before her window.

"Hush!" said Julia, (withdrawing her hand from Mr. Vallaton, and gently tapping his shoulder, while her eyes were lighted up with an arch and charming smile) "Here comes my mother, to whom you, I suppose, are quite a stranger."

"Had I not better make my escape?" cried Vallaton.

"Certainly," returned Julia, still smiling ironically; "she must be *vastly* surprised at seeing

you here. But as you muſt now inevitably meet her, you may as well ſit ſtill."

'I wiſh,' cried Vallaton, greatly diſordered, 'I wiſh I could get off.'

"Now, indeed," ſaid Julia, "this is carrying the jeſt too far." Here Mrs. Delmond entered, and Julia, with a look of infinite ſatisfaction, roſe to receive her. "I can now," ſaid ſhe, holding out her hands, "I can now, you ſee, receive my dear mamma with proper reſpect. I cannot yet, indeed, make a handſome curteſy, but Mr. Vallaton here ſhall make a bow for me; for which I ſhall bye and bye make him two curteſies in return. What ſay you to the bargain?"

Vallaton, who, on the entrance of Mrs. Delmond, had made a haſty retreat from the ſide of Julia to a chair at the further end of the room, made a ſtiff and formal bow. Mrs. Delmond, with an air ſtill more ſtiff and embarraſſed, coldly returned his ſalute.—So ſeldom were the impreſſions made upon the mind of this ſweet lady ſtrong enough to form an index of her countenance, that Julia was thunderſtruck on obſerving diſpleaſure and ſurpriſe to be now written upon it in the moſt legible characters She took the ſeat which Vallaton had lately occupied, and remained for a few moments ſilent. Mortified and perplexed by a behaviour which to her was wholly unaccountable, Julia heſitated on what ſubject to addreſs her; but longer ſilence being utterly inſupportable, ſhe at length aſked, whether ſhe had met Miſs Botherim?

'Yes;' returned Mrs. Delmond. Another pauſe enſued.

"I hope ſhe will come back to tea;" ſaid Julia. "Did ſhe not tell us that ſhe would?" looking to Vallaton.

'I believe

'I believe so,' said Vallaton; 'yes, she certainly promised, now that I remember. I think that I had better go and meet her. Perhaps, as she is so bad a walker, she may be glad of my assistance.'

Julia bowed her assent; and Vallaton, seemingly rejoicing in the excuse, quickly hurried away.

"Good heavens! my dear mother," cried Julia, as soon as he was out of the room, "how strange you looked upon Mr. Vallaton! What is the matter with you? You seem as if you had never seen him before."

'I never did see him,' returned Mrs. Delmond, 'and very little expected to find him here. He is a sort of person with whom, I am sure, your father would be highly displeased with you for cultivating any acquaintance.'

"My father," repeated Julia, raising up her hands, "displeased with Mr. Vallaton! What does this mean? What has happened, my dear mother, since you were, last here, to occasion this change?"

'Since I was last here, child! I really do not understand you.'

"Ah! do not, my dear, dearest mother! for heaven's sake, do not perplex me. Did you not tell me that my father approved of Mr. Vallaton? that he had promised General Villers to—to give his consent to——Oh! my mother, why do you look so astonished?"

'Why? because I *am* astonished. What had General Villers to do with this man? Or how should your father come to talk of such a person to the General? You seem to me to be quite in a dream. Really, child, I wish you would recollect yourself.'

The heart of Julia sunk within her at this

ſpeech. The vermillion tint which had ſo lately flushed her lovely cheek, making her brilliant eyes ſtill more brilliant, gave place to the pale livery of deſpair. She could ſcarcely retain command enough of her voice faintly to ſay, as ſhe graſped her mother's hand, "Have I indeed been in a dream? Did I not hear of General Villers's viſit to my father, and of his introducing—"

'Major Minden as your lover,' ſaid Mrs. Delmond.

"Major Minden!" faintly repeated Julia, her eyes fixed in a ghaſtly ſtare. "Then—then, indeed, am I wretched for ever!"

'Indeed, Julia, you are very ſtrange,' ſaid Mrs. Delmond. 'You ſeemed mightily pleaſed with his propoſal when I firſt told you of it: you were then all ſmiles and acquieſcence. What now I wonder has made ſuch an alteration in your ſentiments? If this Mr. Vallaton were not a married man, I declare I ſhould think that he had got hold of your heart.'

"Is Mr. Vallaton a married man?" ſaid Julia, without being at all conſcious of what ſhe ſaid.

'Yes, to be ſure,' returned her mother; 'don't you know that he has a wife and five children?'

"I had forgot that," ſaid Julia, with a vacant ſmile.

'Why, child, what is the matter with you? You appear quite ſtupified—bleſs me, how pale you are! are you ſick?'

"Yes; very, very ſick!" uttered Julia ſinking upon the arm of the ſopha, and immediately fainting away.

Her mother, who happily was not ſubject to violent alarms, quietly went to the kitchen to deſire

fire ſome water. 'Julia is in a fainting fit,' ſaid ſhe to the maid, in the ſame voice ſhe would have ſaid, Julia has put on her gloves, or Julia wants her ſlippers; and then, with equal compoſure, added, 'you had better come to ſee if you can help her.' The girl ſtood in no need of the injunction; for no ſooner did ſhe hear of her young miſtreſs's having fainted, than forgetful of the reſpect due to her ſuperior, ſhe ſprung paſt Mrs. Delmond, and was in a moment on her knees by the ſide of Julia, ſprinkling water in her face, and trying all the uſual methods of recovery.

Julia at length recovered, but it was to more cruel ſufferings than her ſickneſs had occaſioned. She at one glance perceived the dreadful conſequences of the fatal miſtake into which the equivocal expreſſions of her mother, aided by her own ſanguine imagination, had ſo unfortunately plunged her. Her virgin heart, her plighted vows were given to Vallaton; while her father's promiſe was paſſed to the General in favour of a man whom ſhe ſcarcely recollected to have ſeen, but whom ſhe was thoroughly convinced it was utterly impoſſible ſhe ſhould ever love. Thus was ſhe on the eve of one of thoſe cruel perſecutions with which ſo many heroines have been tormented. Often, indeed, had ſhe wondered at having eſcaped ſo very common a calamity for ſuch a length of time; and often in imagination had ſhe approved of the ſpirit with which ſhe was reſolved to act upon ſuch an occaſion. Already did ſhe behold Major Minden, with the determined and ſelfiſh obſtinacy of the hateful Solmes, perſiſting in ſeizing her reluctant hand; while her father, with all the cruelty of all the Harlowes, attempted to force her to the hateful union. But never, (ſhe reſolved) never would ſhe diſgrace the prin-

ciples ſhe had adopted, by a baſe ſubmiſſion to the will of an arbitrary tyrant. Her fate was cruel, but it was not unexampled. From all that ſhe had read, ſhe had rather cauſe to eſteem herſelf peculiarly fortunate in being ſo long exempted from the common misfortune of her ſex. Few novels furniſhed an example of any young woman who had been permitted to attain her nineteenth year, without having been diſtreſſed by the addreſſes of a numberleſs train of admirers, all equally odious and diſagreeable as this Major Minden. Where was the female, poſſeſſed of any tolerable ſhare of beauty, who had not been perſecuted by a cruel hard-hearted father, in favour of ſome one of the deteſted wretches by whom ſhe was beſet? Why, then, ſhould ſhe complain? Her ſufferings were only ſuch as, in the preſent depraved ſtate of ſociety, were the inevitable lot of her unhappy ſex!

Such were the reflections of Julia, on recovering her recollection. But before ſhe had ſufficient time to conſider the plan of conduct it would be proper to adopt on this momentous criſis of her fate, ſhe was rouſed from her reverie by Mrs. Delmond, who peremptorily deſired to know, what had occaſioned the violence of her emotions? The tone in which the queſtion was put, though it had in reality acquired its emphaſis from aſtoniſhment and curioſity, appeared to Julia a ſufficient indication of the determined exertion of deſpotic authority; ſhe therefore took care to arm herſelf againſt the weapons of tyranny and injuſtice by an evaſive anſwer.

'The weakneſs of your ſpirits!' rejoined Mrs. Delmond, repeating the concluding words of her daughter. 'It is ſtrange that your ſpirits ſhould be ſo much weaker, now that your health is almoſt

moſt quite eſtabliſhed; and ſtill ſtranger, that Major Minden ſhould appear ſo much more diſagreeable to you now than at the time I firſt mentioned him.'

"Major Minden! ah, deareſt Madam, have mercy on me, I beſeech you, and repeat not his odious name. It is worſe than death to me to hear it. No ſound was ever half ſo hateful to my ears! It thrills my inmoſt ſoul with horror! Oh wretched, miſerable, and unhappy girl that I am! Why was I doomed to ſurvive the late accident? why was I reſerved for this much more unhappy fate? Never, ſurely, was any one ſo truly unfortunate! Never was the miſery of mortal equal to mine!"

'Julia! why Julia, have you loſt your ſenſes? I know not for my life what to think, what to make of all this nonſenſe. I wonder what your father would ſay, if he were to hear you! But I would adviſe you to beware of talking in this ridiculous ſtrain to him.'

"And can my father be ſo determined againſt me? Can he be ſo cruel, ſo hard-hearted to his Julia, as to force her to a hated union with the man ſhe moſt deteſts? Will he not be moved by my prayers? Will he not be touched with pity by my diſtreſs? Will he behold the miſery of his poor unfortunate Julia, without one feeling of compaſſion? Oh yes, yes; his heart is ſteeled by the cruel prejudices of ſociety, and I am doomed to add one to the numerous victims of a depraved and unnatural ſtate of civilization!"

'Really, Julia, while you ſpeak ſuch nonſenſe, you do not deſerve an anſwer. Let me tell you, Miſs, your father is too good to you by half, and has completely ſpoiled you by his indulgence.'

"And is my mamma too become the advocate

of this deteſted man? Does ſhe too join in the cruel perſecution of her poor unhappy Julia? Oh, my dear mamma, on my knees, if I could, on my knees would I conjure you to ſpare me—to ſave me from this cruel, cruel fate."

'Surely,' cried Mrs. Delmond, riſing, 'nothing was ever ſo provokingly abſurd as this ridiculous behaviour. I cannot ſtay to liſten to ſuch jargon, which, I ſuppoſe, you have learned from Miſs Botherim, who has made herſelf the town-talk with her nonſenſe.'

"Oh Madam, dear Madam! dear, dear Mamma! do not leave me in diſpleaſure."

'Why ſhould I ſtay, if you are reſolved not to liſten to any thing I ſay? I had, indeed, many things to communicate to you, not only concerning Major Minden, but about young Mr. Churchill, from whom we have had a viſit. He made a polite offer of his carriage to fetch you home, which your father has accepted. Indeed, if we had known where to procure one, we ſhould have contrived to have had you carried home a week ago, notwithſtanding the opinion of Mr. Gubbles; but as the General's family had gone to Brighton races, and are not to return till the end of the week, we knew not where to apply. Mr. Churchill, however, has ſaved us from all further trouble on this head; and has ſo pleaſed your father by his behaviour, that if you really give him the preference to the Major, I do not believe your choice will meet with any oppoſition. The—'

"Dear madam, let me——"

"Nay, do not interrupt me; I will hear no more of your nonſenſe. The chariot will be here to-morrow afternoon about five o'clock, which your father thinks the beſt time for your removal. He is ſo much taken up by the thoughts of ſeeing you,

you, that I do not believe he will get a wink of ſleep to-night. Indeed, Julia, you can never ſhew enough of gratitude to ſo good a father, who loves you as his very ſoul. I ſhall not ſay a word to him of your behaviour this evening, as it would only ſerve to vex him; and I hope to find you in a better frame to-morrow."

Julia again attempted to ſpeak, but Mrs. Delmond, with more firmneſs than it was uſual for her to exert, prevented her reply; and after giving ſome directions to the ſervants, departed; not a little diſſatisfied with the conduct of her daughter.

Soon as her mother was out of hearing, Julia burſt forth into a pathetic exclamation on the hardſhip of her deſtiny. Her calamity had now aſſumed an hydra form; in the ſhape of Churchill, another perſecutor appeared! And though two were a trifling number, to be ſure, compared with the *hoſts* which diſturb the repoſe of the Lady Seraphinas and Angelinas, over whoſe diſtreſſes ſhe had ſhed ſo many tears, her imagination could even from theſe have extracted enough of food for terror and alarm, had no ſuch perſon as Vallaton been in exiſtence. At preſent, however, it muſt be confeſſed, that in the encouragement ſhe had given to that gentleman's addreſſes; in the intereſt he had obtained in her affections; and in the utter deſtruction of the hopes ſhe had been led to entertain of her father's approbation of his ſuit; ſhe was not without real cauſe of uneaſineſs and diſquiet.

She bitterly reproached herſelf, for having been duped by her own ardent imagination into a miſtake, which ſhe now perceived ſhe might have ſeen through on a moment's reflection. But ſtill more bitterly did ſhe bewail thoſe falſe prejudices which influenced her father's mind; prejudices,

which engendered the wish of seeing her united to a man of established character and independent fortune; and which erroneously concluded, that the want of either of these in the object of her choice would be an obstacle to her felicity.

"Unhappy state of civilization!" cried she; "deplorable constitutions of society! I am doomed to add to the number of your wretched victims! While things continue in the present miserable situation, fathers will be often led into the fatal error of thinking themselves in some instances wiser than their children! Oh, that I had not been born, till truth had enlightened the world!"

In this manner did Julia continue to deplore herself, till the entrance of Mr. Vallaton; who having watched the departure of Mrs. Delmond, was no sooner assured of her being out of sight of the house, than he eagerly returned to renew the interesting conversation which her appearance had so unseasonably interrupted.

'In tears, my Julia!' exclaimed her astonished lover: 'What has occasioned your uneasiness? From whence proceed these looks of soft dejection?'

"Ah! Mr. Vallaton, you see before you the most unfortunate of human beings! My cruel father——"

'What of him? Has he forbidden you to see me? Has he been so——'

"Alas! he knows not of your visits; but he has formed the dreadful resolution of uniting me to a man my soul detests!"

'And will you tamely submit to this outrage upon the first principles of justice? Will you, from an immoral and slavish deference to the man who calls himself your father, sacrifice the first rights of humanity—the right of following your own

own inclination? What magic is there in the name of father, that can ſanctify ſo baſe a direliction of duty?'

"No, my beſt, my only friend," cried Julia; "be aſſured I would ſooner die than break the promiſe I have made to you. My father ſhall never prevail upon me to do that; but I dread the thoughts of what I have to encounter in braving his diſpleaſure."

'As to your promiſe,' returned Vallaton, 'you know, that by the principles of our true philoſophy, all regard to promiſes is utterly diſcarded. In the eye of a philoſopher no promiſe is, or ought to be, binding. All ſcrupuloſity about fulfilling the engagements into which we have entered, is childiſh and abſurd. It is not, therefore, becauſe you have *promiſed* to be mine, that you ought to become ſo;* but becauſe by an union with me you can beſt promote the grand end of life—general utility.'

"Dear, generous Vallaton, how noble are thy ſentiments! How charmingly diſintereſted—how purely virtuous!"

'They are ſimply the deductions of truth. If the perſon that is choſen for you by your father, ſhould, upon inveſtigation of his principles, be found more enlightened; if he ſhould be poſſeſſed of ſuperior powers; if he ſhould be more capable of energizing; if, as a percipient being, he ſhould be endowed with a keener ſenſibility of your ſuperior merit; ſhould be able to make a higher eſtimate of the extraordinary powers of your mind; then it becomes my duty to yield to him, who ſhall in this caſe be proved a being of greater moral worth.'

"Ah!

* See Pol. Juſ.

"Ah! Vallaton, where ſhall the man be found poſſeſſed of ſuch an exalted way of thinking as yourſelf? How mean, compared to yours, would be the ſelfiſh ſentiments of either of the gentlemen, (for there are two pretenders to my favour) whoſe addreſſes are encouraged by my father! But as to them my mind is perfectly made up."

'Why, then, this cruel agitation of your ſpirits? Why this diſmay and apprehenſion?'

"And would you have me, without diſmay, behold the approach of our ſeparation! I go home to-morrow; and long, very long may it be, before we can have an opportunity of ſeeing each other again."

'And why go home to-morrow, my adored Julia? Why obey the arbitrary mandate of a tyrant father? Why return to the baſe controul of unjuſt and uſurped authority? Let me at leaſt conjure you to examine the conſequences of your return, that ſo your conduct may be governed by proper motives.'

"Alas! what can I do? what apology can I offer for delay? He knows I am now able to bear a much longer journey."

The eyes of Vallaton ſparkled with exſtacy as, ſeizing her hand, he eagerly exclaimed, 'Then take that longer journey, my beloved Julia; take it under the protection of a man who prefers you to all your ſex, becauſe of your *real, intrinſic*, and *imperiſhable* excellence; who loves you as virtue perſonified; and whoſe love muſt, of neceſſity, be laſting as the adamantine foundation on which it ſtands.'

"Good heavens! Mr. Vallaton, what is it you propoſe? Elope with you! no more to ſee my father! Ah, no; it would too ſurely break his heart.

heart. I cannot think of taking so very unjustifiable a step."

'Unjustifiable!' repeated Vallaton; and upon what principles unjustifiable? If, indeed, you can prove your father to be a being of more moral worth, (and that therefore his happiness ought to be promoted in preference to mine) I have nothing further to urge.'

"Alas!" returned Julia, sighing, "how incapable am I of estimating the moral worth of two individuals so opposite in their sentiments, and of characters so totally different. May not both, in their way, be equally estimable?"

'Impossible!' retorted the philosopher; 'utterly impossible. To one of us you must give an immediate and decided preference. Let us be judged by the correct and infallible criterion of philosophy. Consider which of us is most likely to benefit the species by the exertion of powers, and energies, and talents; which of us has the most distinct perception of the nature of happiness, and the clearest views of the progress of mind?—For this alone is virtue.'

"Alas!" said Julia, "my poor father knows nothing of the new philosophy; but notwithstanding his unhappy prejudices, he is one of the worthiest of men."

'How can one, of my lovely Julia's very superior understanding admit of such contradictions? You confess his ignorance, (for one who knows not the new philosophy must, of course, be ignorant) you own him the victim of narrow and illiberal prejudice, and yet you speak of his worth! What is the worth of any being, but as it tends to general utility? In what respect can such a person as your father benefit society? And what is the force

force of that claim which he pretends to have upon you?"

"Has he then no claims upon his daughter?"

'How can the well-informed, the philoſophically-inſtructed Julia put ſuch a queſtion? Does ſhe not know that the progreſs of mind—the virtue, the happineſs, the perfection of the human race, depends upon abrogating theſe unnatural and faſtidious diſtinctions, which ariſtocratical pride and ſelfiſhneſs have interwoven in the conſtitutions of ſociety? Has it not been to demonſtration proved, that the prejudices of *filial duty*, and *family affection*, *gratitude to benefactors*, and *regard to promiſes*, are the great barriers to the ſtate of perfect virtue? Theſe obſtacles to perfection it is the glory of philoſophy to demoliſh, and the duty of every perſon, impreſſed with a ſenſe of perfectibility, to remove. In the preſent inſtance, you, my Julia, are called to the energetic conflict by another motive, which involves a duty of a very ſerious nature. It is in your power to promote the happineſs of an individual, whoſe talents and virtues may be either called forth "to energiſe, according to the flower and ſummit of their nature;" or, blaſted by the ravages of paſſion, and withered by the canker of diſappointment, may become loſt to the grand purpoſe of general utility. Oh, Julia, let me beſeech you to conſider——'

Here the note from Bridgetina was put into the hands of Julia by her maid, and amply repaid Mr. Vallaton for the temporary interruption it had occaſioned, by the opportunity it afforded him of reinforcing his arguments from the authority of ſo illuſtrious an example.

When Miſs Botherim had firſt intimated her intentions of following Henry to London, the

ſcheme

ſcheme appeared to Julia to be fraught with romantic abſurdity, improper, diſgraceful, and ridiculous. But now that it was diſplayed in its proper colours by the eloquence of Vallaton, ſhe perceived in it the grand effort of a noble mind, that roſe ſuperior to the vulgar prejudices of an ill-conſtituted ſociety.

We ſhall not fatigue our readers by the particulars of the converſation that enſued. Suffice it to ſay, that the oppoſition of Julia to the propoſal of her eloquent admirer became fainter and fainter; till, convinced by his arguments, or overcome by his perſuaſion, ſhe finally conſented to ſet an example of moral rectitude, by throwing off the ignoble chains of filial duty, and to contribute her ſhare to the general weal, by promoting the happineſs of one of the moſt zealous of its advocates.

CHAP. IV.

——————" Becoming my critical foe,
" Has declar'd that my ſtile *is exceedingly low*;
" *That facts are miſtated, aſſertions untrue*;
" *That I give her not half of the praiſe which is due,*
" But if the ſaid ſpeeches ſeem not very good,
" I will ſwear I detail'd them as well as I cou'd."
SIMKIN'S LETTERS.

THE peaceful village of W—— was ſtill huſhed in the ſilence of repoſe, when juſt as the ſteeple-clock repeated the hour of four, Citizen Glib gave notice to Bridgetina of the arrival of the ſtage-coach. She immediately haſtened with him to the inn

inn at which it changed horſes, and fortunately found a vacant ſeat in the heavy-laden vehicle, into which ſhe was helped by the worthy citizen; who, while he puſhed her in, gave her his uſual advice to exert her energies, to which he was adding ſome other wiſe inſtructions, when the coachman ſmacked his whip, and drove off.

Little was ſpoken by any of the party during the enſuing ſtage, but from what paſſed at breakfaſt, our heroine diſcovered ſo much of her companions, as to learn that two of them were gentlemen of the law, returning from the aſſizes, and that the third was a farmer or grazier from her own neighbourhood. They all treated her with great civility, but ſpoke chiefly to each other concerning affairs to which ſhe was a total ſtranger, ſo that a conſiderable time elapſed before ſhe found an opportunity of joining in the converſation. At length, however, ſhe burſt upon their aſtoniſhed ſenſes in an harangue, by which if they were not greatly edified, the fault muſt have lain in their own ſtupidity, or rather, perhaps, in thoſe prejudices which rendered them invulnerable to the weapons of truth. In vain did ſhe labour to convince the two lawyers of the inutility of the law, and of the immorality of every ſpecies of coercion. In vain did ſhe conjure up all the flowers of rhetoric, to perſuade them to give up a profeſſion which ſhe deſcribed to be one uniform maſs of error and abſurdity.

The two lawyers were not a little aſtoniſhed to hear ſuch a ſtream of eloquence flow from ſo unexpected a ſource. They for ſome time thought it inexhauſtible, but on putting ſome pertinent queries to the fair orator, they diſcovered that her eloquence, like the little coach and horſes to be ſeen in the ſhew-box at the fair, ran always the

ſame

ſame round. In vain did they endeavour to make it trace a wider circle; it could neither ſtop, nor turn, nor go ſtrait forwards, nor move in any other direction than that in which it had at firſt attracted their curioſity. After exciting it to take two or three rounds over the ſame ground, they were perfectly ſatisfied as to the extent of its powers; and in order to give it leiſure to run quietly down, they compoſed themſelves to ſleep. The honeſt farmer had reſigned himſelf to Morpheus in the beginning of the debate, ſo that Bridgetina was left to enjoy the pleaſure of her own meditations for the greater part of the journey.

Of all the accumulated evils with which the preſent unnatural ſtate of civilization is ſo fully fraught, none is more ſeverely felt by the modern biographer than that facility of communication eſtabliſhed throughout all parts of the kingdom; whereby the poſſibility of adventures upon the road is almoſt entirely cut off. In former times, an heroine could not travel twenty miles, without encountering ſo many ſtrange incidents, that the reader no ſooner had notice of her having mounted her horſe, than his imagination was upon the ſpur for ſome great event. Every inn was a ſcene of action; and every ſtage ſo fruitful of adventures, that the judicious writer had ſome difficulty in compreſſing them within the limits of his volume. But now that maids and matrons of every rank and ſtation, from the dame of quality who daſhes in her chariot and ſix, to the ſimple adventureſs, who from the top of the heavy coach looks down upon her Grace, all may travel from one end of the kingdom to the other, without let, hindrance, or moleſtation, an author might as reaſonably expect to pick up a purſe of gold upon the road

as

as an event worth narrating. If I do not this minute take care, Bridgetina will be at the end of her journey before I finiſh my digreſſion. Allons, then, my good reader, let us haſten to the inn-door, to be ready to receive her. We are juſt in time; for here, at the Golden-Croſs, you may behold her juſt alighted.

Impatient as our heroine may be ſuppoſed to be to fulfil the great purport of her journey, ſhe found herſelf ſo oppreſſed by fatigue, (this being the firſt time of her having travelled ten miles from her native village, and ſo utterly incapable of further exertion, that ſhe reſolved to recruit herſelf by a night's repoſe. She was, at her own deſire, conducted to a bed-chamber, but did not find it ſo eaſy a matter to get the bed prepared for her reception. The chambermaid, prudently reſolving, that if ſhe did not chooſe to eat ſupper, it ſhould not be for want of time, left her for a full hour to enjoy the benefit of her own reflections. In vain did ſhe ring her bell; in vain did ſhe poke her head out into the paſſage, at the ſound of every footſtep, and repeat to every waiter an account of her diſtreſs. No one ſeemed to trouble themſelves about her; and ſhe ſaw no alternative, but either to paſs the night in her chair, or to throw herſelf on the bed as it was. She preferred the latter; but juſt as ſhe was laying down, the chambermaid appeared.

"You ought to have known, young woman," ſaid Bridgetina, "that man has not as yet arrived at that degree of perfection that can render him inſenſible to the languor of fatigue. I do not ſay that you ought to have returned to make my bed, becauſe you promiſed, but becauſe what you promiſed you ought to have performed, whether you had promiſed it or not."

"I came

'I came as ſoon as I could get away;' replied the girl pertly. 'There is no being in twenty places at a time.'

"What you ſay is indeed juſt, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety;" returned Bridgetina. "No one has as yet been capable of energizing in ſuch an extraordinary degree. But who can ſay what future improvements may not yet take place? Who can ſet bounds to the attainments of a perfectible being? Or who, that knowing mind to be as all, and matter to be as nothing, will dare pronounce what is, or what is not, poſſible to its exertions?"

The girl ſtared, and on ſurveying our heroine more minutely, wondered that ſhe had not ſooner diſcovered the proofs that were now ſo evident of her inſanity. Perceiving, however, no ſymptoms of outrageous phrenzy, ſhe went on with her work, but determined to acquaint her miſtreſs with the diſcovery ſhe had made.

Bridgetina, perceiving that ſhe had attracted the ſervant's attention, fatigued as ſhe was, would not loſe the favourable opportunity of impreſſing the mind of a percipient being with the important truths of philoſophy. "I ſee," ſaid ſhe, raiſing her voice, "I ſee, by the attention you have given to my diſcourſe, that you are not deſtitute of moral ſenſibility. Perhaps, notwithſtanding your lowly ſtation, you may, in this houſe of public reception, have been favoured with an opportunity of liſtening to the diſcourſes of enlightened men? Perhaps ſome philoſopher, by addreſſing the common ſympathies of our nature, has awakened the dormant powers of your mind. Perhaps the germ of intellect has been arouſed. If ſo, by adding the improvement of to-day with the progreſs of the day before, you may (though a ſervant) be no longer

longer deſtitute of the beſt characteriſtics of a rational being"

'You had better get into bed, Ma'am,' ſaid the girl; 'you will be much the better for a night's ſleep'

"Till the progreſs of mind is further advanced, ſleep is, as you ſay, a neceſſary reſtorative to the bodily organs. But if, as I ſuppoſe, you have had an opportunity of liſtening to the deductions of truth, you cannot be ignorant, that the time approaches when ſleep ſhall be no longer neceſſary. Oh, that to that chain of events, which has been generating from all eternity, ſome link had been added that would have brought me into the world at a more advanced period! Oh, that I had lived at an æra when one's bones could have borne the jolting of a ſtage couch for a hundred miles without being ſenſible of fatigue! But in the preſent diſtempered ſtate of civilization it is impoſſible to energize ſo effectually. We are only, as you know, my good girl, perfectible, but not perfect beings. And notwithſtanding the illuſtrious examples, recorded in the annals of ſome celebrated modern romances, of heroines who have energized in ſo extraordinary a manner, as after having travelled for hundreds of miles on the hard backs of mules or horſes, without either ſtop or refreſhment, to have alighted ſo little wearied with their journey as to have no occaſion for the vulgar reſtorative of ſleep, we may depend upon it ſuch inſtances are yet but rare."

Bridgetina had no ſooner ſtepped into bed, than the chambermaid hurried to her miſtreſs with the very unwelcome intelligence, that a perſon of deranged intellects had got poſſeſſion of one of her apartments.

"Who

"Who is ſhe? From whence did ſhe come?" aſked the miſtreſs.

'I do not know who ſhe is,' replied the girl; 'but from the manner in which ſhe preachified, I ſhould ſuppoſe her to be a Methodiſt.'

"Oh, if ſhe be a Methodiſt, ſhe will be taken care of;" ſaid the miſtreſs, much relieved by this part of the girl's information. "If ſhe does not get ſo well as to leave us in the morning, I ſhall inform ſome of the congregation, and I know that at leaſt they will not let her want."

In the morning, as ſoon as Bridgetina's bell gave notice of her being awake, the landlady herſelf attended her; not, however, without the precaution of placing the chambermaid at the door of the apartment, to be ready in caſe ſhe ſhould find it neceſſary to call further aſſiſtance. The hoſteſs found the young lady up and dreſſed; and though the extraordinary manner in which her clothes were put on confirmed, in her opinion, the account of the chambermaid, ſhe did not now ſpeak in ſuch a manner as to ratify the ſuſpicion. After anſwering the civil enquiries of her hoſteſs, ſhe ſaid "ſhe ſhould be glad to have breakfaſt immediately, as ſhe was impatient to fly to her friends, ſome of whom ſhe expected would be overwhelmed with rapture at her arrival."

'I know ſome of your friends very well,' returned the landlady, 'and muſt needs declare, that let people ſay of them what they will, I, for my ſhare, have always found them to be very worthy people.'

"Yes," ſaid Bridgetina, "they are, to be ſure, the deſtined long-looked-for ſaviours of the human race; the expungers of ignorance and error; the eradicators of prejudice; the——"

'Pray,

'Pray, Ma'am, is Mr. Timothy Tottenham of your acquaintance? He, I am told, is a very powerful preacher.'

"I know no preachers;" retorted Bridgetina, with an air of ſuperlative contempt.

Poor lady! (thought the landlady) ſhe is deranged, ſure enough. 'You have, you ſay, Ma'am, ſome friends in London, whom you now propoſe to viſit; and if I may preſume to adviſe, I think the ſooner you put yourſelf under their care the better."

"I ſhall, you may depend upon it," replied Bridgetina, "loſe no time in accompliſhing the great end of my journey. Pray do you know Mrs. Fielding of Hanover-ſquare? It is through her I muſt obtain the direction to him who is the object of my journey; with whoſe mind my ſoul yearns to mingle its ſentiments of congenial purity."

One of the fathers of the congregation, no doubt, thought the landlady. He has evidently touched this poor lady's conſcience, by ſome very awakening diſcourſe; then courteſying to Bridgetina, ſhe took her leave, kindly wiſhing that the friend ſhe was in ſearch of might ſpeak comfort to her wounded ſpirit.

Before we accompany Bridgetina to the houſe of Mrs. Fielding, it is neceſſary to give the reader a previous introduction to her acquaintance. A variety of methods preſents itſelf for this purpoſe. We might either, according to the plan we have hitherto purſued, ſelect from the authorities before us the neceſſary materials, and then give them to the reader of our own good pleaſure, without deigning to account for the manner in which the ſaid materials came into our poſſeſſion; or we might place him in ſome convenient ſituation to hear

hear the good lady recount her own hiſtory to ſome female confidante, who, though perhaps for years an inmate of her family, muſt yet be profoundly ignorant, not only of the incidents of her life, but of her temper and diſpoſitions, the names of her connections, and the rank and ſituation ſhe has always held in ſociety. As this method has the greateſt number of precedents in its favour, we ſhould not heſitate to adopt it, did not another preſent itſelf, which, while it indulges the indolence of the writer, will be equally conducive to our purpoſe of inſtruction. This is no other than tranſcribing, for our reader's peruſal, a letter written ſome time previous to the period to which we have brought our hiſtory, from Mr. Sydney to his ſon. For which letter we ſhall refer the reader to the following chapter.

CHAP. V.

" venerate the man whoſe heart is warm,
" Whoſe hands are pure, whoſe doctrine and whoſe life,
" Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
" That he is honeſt in the ſacred cauſe.
" To ſuch I render more than mere reſpect,
" Whoſe actions ſay that they reſpect themſelves."

COWPER.

Letter from the Reverend Mr. Sydney to his Son.

" I Can neither be offended nor ſurpriſed, my dear Henry, at your expreſſing a deſire to be acquainted with the origin of that friendſhip which has

has ſo long ſubſiſted betwixt me and your benefactreſs. You have a natural claim upon my confidence, and the terms upon which, from your boyiſh days, we have lived together, may prove to you how fully I acknowledge it.

"If I have hitherto been more reſerved upon this ſubject than upon any other, it has only been becauſe where the feelings of another were concerned, I did not find myſelf at equal liberty to be explicit. I deteſt the affectation of myſtery, and think the neceſſity for ſecrecy is ſeldom any other than imaginary. But where ſilence is no infringement on the duty of ſincerity, where it does not interfere with the law of truth, it is a debt due to delicacy, the payment of which is guaranteed by ſenſibility and honour.

"Without the conſent of Mrs. Fielding, therefore, I ſhould have declined a compliance with your requeſt; but it is at her own deſire, that I now proceed to give you a ſketch of her little hiſtory.

"You know the degree of our relationſhip, which is juſt near enough to authoriſe a poor couſin to claim kindred with a rich one, and ſufficiently diſtant to afford the latter an excuſe for forgetting the connection. Her father was a clergyman of the church of England, and poſſeſſed a very good living, but which was inconſiderable when compared to his expectations. Theſe looked to the firſt preferments in the church, to which he was ſo certain of ſucceeding, that he thought it proper to poſtpone the thoughts of making any proviſion for his family till they were actually in his poſſeſſion. The deanery of ——, worth fourteen hundred a year, was only withheld from him by the life of an infirm old man, who had long been waſted to a ſhadow by the ſevere attacks of a chronic

chronic asthma. Nothing could be more precarious than such a tenure of existence, except those air-built speculations upon futurity, whose rapid extinction so often mocks the hopes of man. Two years before the death of this confirmed valetudinary, a fever of a few days carried off his appointed successor, by whose death his only daughter, then in her nineteenth year, was left destitute of all provision, and doomed to undergo the mortifying trials of dependence.

"A few months previous to the death of Mr. Fielding, I had, in consequence of a recommendation from Professor *****, under whose auspices I had finished my studies at the college at Glasgow, been appointed tutor to the sons of Lord Brierston. I had entered the family with no great predilection in favour of such a situation; but in the politeness of his lordship's manners, and in the good dispositions of my pupils, I found a counter-balance to the mortifications which petulant affluence is ever ready to bestow on humble poverty. Lady Brierston, his lordship's second wife, was the widow of an eastern nabob, who had left to her the whole of his immense fortune, which, during the period of her own life, and in case of surviving his lordship, she still reserved in her own disposal. This lady was first-cousin to Mr. Fielding, and to her protection, at the death of her father, was Maria Fielding consigned.

"Never shall the day of her arrival at Brierston be effaced from my memory. Never shall I forget the dignified humility, the modest and graceful propriety with which she answered the unfeeling interrogatories of her haughty kinswoman.

Lady Brierston soon felt, but could not so soon pardon, the superiority of her dependent cousin. From a knowledge of what passed in her own

mind, ſhe conſidered pride as the neceſſary concomitant of every advantage, natural or acquired; and to mortify this imaginary pride, ſhe concluded to be equally wiſe and meritorious.

"In the execution of this plan of mortification, her ladyſhip had abundance of auxiliaries.

"It is the peculiar misfortune of thoſe who move in a certain ſphere, to have their worſt propenſities ſo flattered as to render it almoſt impoſſible for them to eſcape the ſnare of ſelf-deluſion. The poſſeſſors of rank and fortune are every one ſurrounded by a ſort of atmoſphere of their own, which not only diſtorts and obſtructs the view of external objects, but which renders it difficult for them to penetrate the motives of their own hearts. Such was the ſituation of Lady Brierſton. As her charity and benevolence, in taking the orphan daughter of her couſin under her protection, was the theme of daily praiſe; ſhe could not doubt that ſhe had exerted a very extraordinary degree of thoſe amiable qualities. And no ſooner did ſhe, by a ſarcaſtic ſneer at the ſuperior information and extraordinary talents of her couſin, declare the birth of jealouſy and envy, than ſhe received ſuch encomiums on her *wiſdom* and *prudence* in checking the conceit of a young creature who had been quite ſpoiled by indulgence, as perfectly ſatisfied her of the propriety of her conduct.

"When her ladyſhip formed the reſolution of wounding the ſpirit of her too amiable relation, by attacks upon her ſuppoſed vanity, ſhe was ignorant of the character with which ſhe had to deal. The mind of Maria Fielding was too great for the abode of vanity. Her ideas of excellence were too grand, too exalted, to permit her to view her own attainments through any other medium than that of unfeigned humility. She perceived the unkindneſs

unkindneſs of her couſin, and grieved at the proofs of it, as they appeared to bear witneſs againſt the heart of one ſhe wiſhed to love; but ſhe was not to be mortified by ſneers againſt learned ladies, while conſcious ſhe could make no pretentions to the character of *learned*, or hurt by alluſions to that ſtate of poverty to which ſhe had never attached the idea of diſgrace, and of which, therefore, ſhe knew not how to be aſhamed. In ſhort, the real dignity of Miſs Fielding's character roſe above every aſſault; and at laſt ſo far conquered even the ſelfiſh arrogance of her proud protectreſs, that ſhe gradually became leſs aſſiduous in her efforts to torment her, and finally ſuffered herſelf to reap the advantage of thoſe talents which ſhe had ſo long pretended to deſpiſe.

Miſs Fielding was not long an inhabitant of Brierſton, till my heart did homage to her virtues. The ſimilarity of our taſtes, ſentiments, and diſpoſitions, was of itſelf ſufficient to create a ſympathy betwixt us, which was perhaps increaſed by the ſimilarity of our ſituations. In ſhort, my ſon, for I feel it painful to dwell upon the ſubject, our mutual eſteem was ſoon increaſed to the ardency of a ſincere and mutual paſſion, which, during the two years that we lived under the ſame roof, was the ſource of the ſweeteſt pleaſure, the moſt delicious hope, and the moſt anxious ſolicitude.

"At length the hour of trial arrived. Lord Brierſton, who had for ſome time entertained ſuſpicions of our attachment, queſtioned me upon the ſubject. I had too great an abhorrence of duplicity to deny the juſtice of his ſuſpicions. He heard my confeſſion in ſilence, and left me without any expreſſion either of cenſure or approbation. A week paſſed without any alteration in

the behaviour of his lordſhip, which was at all times polite, diſtant, and reſerved. At the end of that period he one morning entered my apartment with a look that denoted unuſual ſatisfaction; and deſiring his ſons to leave the room, told me he was exceedingly pleaſed at having it in his power effectually to promote my happineſs. I need not, to a young man like you, tell how my heart throbbed at this intelligence, or deſcribe with what tumultuous joy it bounded at the idea of being united to the dear object of my affections? For ſuch was the interpretation I gave to the deſigns of his lordſhip: nor was I deceived in my conjectures. He told me that from the moment he had perceived the mutual affection that ſubſiſted between me and his amiable couſin, he had conceived a plan for our union, which, though it had at firſt met with ſome oppoſition from his lady, was now honoured with her full approbation. It was fully ripe for execution. I had nothing to do but to take orders, and the living of———, worth more than ſix hundred a year, waited my acceptance. Nor ſhould the couſin of Lady Brierſton be ſuffered to enter into any family as a beggar. Her ladyſhip had that morning ſealed to her a gift of two thouſand pounds, which they ſhould both think very well beſtowed upon one whoſe whole character and conduct was ſo worthy of their eſteem. "You make no reply, Mr. Sydney," ſaid his lordſhip, perceiving the contending emotions that ſtruggled in my breaſt. "Is there any thing diſagreeable to you in my propoſal?"

"What reply can I make to generoſity ſo noble—to goodneſs ſo unmerited? And yet, forgive me, my Lord; forgive me, if, in the tumult your lordſhip's unexpected propoſal has excited, I am deprived of the power of deciding. Yet why

why ſhould I heſitate? The moment that makes paſſion the conqueror of conſcience, renders me unworthy of your eſteem; unworthy of the affection of her who is dearer to me than every thing but duty."

'I really do not underſtand you;' returned his Lordſhip, with apparent pique. 'Your conſcience is of a very extraordinary nature, indeed, if it ſtands betwixt you and a good living.'

"Are there not, my Lord, certain preliminaries neceſſary to qualify me for that preferment? Am I not by theſe to declare my ſolemn aſſent to explanations and points of doctrine which either I do not underſtand, or cannot approve? And ſhould I do ſo with one remaining doubt upon my mind, muſt I not incur the heavy guilt of perjury?"

'And pray, Mr. Sydney, do you conſider yourſelf as ſo much wiſer and ſo much better than all the learned and worthy men who every day make the declaration at which you ſcruple? Are all who enter the church to be conſidered as perjured?'

"God forbid! Various are the views, which, with equal integrity of intention, may be taken of the ſame ſubject. That which I cannot reconcile to myſelf, another may fully approve. The arguments which carry conviction to my mind, may to his appear nugatory and futile. No honeſt man will condemn another for differing from him in opinion; but who can approve the hypocrite, who, from views of intereſt or ambition, makes public profeſſion of opinions which privately he condemns? No; rather let me eat the bread of miſery, and drink the tears of affliction, than purchaſe the enjoyment of every earthly bliſs at the expence of ſincerity."

"His Lordſhip, far from being convinced by my arguments, was not a little diſpleaſed at my preſumption. In daring to think for myſelf, he thought I had aſſumed a right to which I had no proper title. His prejudices, from birth, education, and habit, were ſtrong, but his heart was ſtill benevolent. He wiſhed me to overcome ſcruples he conſidered as ridiculous; and did not doubt, that upon reflection I would open my eyes to my true intereſt. He gave me two days for deliberation, at the end of which I was either to be conſidered as the future huſband of Miſs Fielding, or take my leave of Brierſton, and all that it contained, for ever.

"You, my dear Henry, are yet a ſtranger (oh! may you long be ſo) to the wild impetuoſity of an extravagant and domineering paſſion. An union with Miſs Fielding had long compriſed in it every idea of earthly bliſs. Honours I could have ſpurned; fortune I could have deſpiſed; but to reject the choſen miſtreſs of my affections was an effort of virtue to which my feeble ſoul was hardly equal.

"While his Lordſhip was converſing with me, Lady Brierſton, willing to take to herſelf as much merit in the affair as poſſible, had communicated to Miſs Fielding the whole ſcope of the generous plan that had been formed for our future happineſs. Judge, then, what muſt have been her feelings in beholding me; when, inſtead of the ardent lover, tranſported into extacy at the bliſsful proſpect that had been opened to him, ſhe beheld a trembling wretch, writhing with the torture of contending emotions, and pale from the agony of deſpair! I ſaw how keenly the diſappointment pierced her gentle ſoul. I could not bear the ſight, but haſtily getting up from table

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as ſoon as the cloth was removed, buried myſelf for the reſt of the day in my own apartment.

"To leave me at perfect liberty to purſue my deliberations, his Lordſhip had ſent my pupils on a viſit to their grandfather, ſo that I was maſter of my own time; but far from being able to employ it in inveſtigation and argument, I ſupinely yielded to the ſtupor that had ſtolen upon my ſenſes, and had not yet found courage to determine in what language to addreſs my patron, when I was roufed from my painful lethargy by a meſſage from Miſs Fielding. She deſired to ſee me in the library, and thither with trembling ſteps I inſtantly attended her. She, too, was in agitation; but it was not the agitation of doubt. An air of heroic fortitude mingled with the native meekneſs and gentleneſs that characteriſed her manners. She held out her hand to me when I entered. 'Noble, excellent Sydney,' ſaid ſhe; 'I have ever thought you worthy of my eſteem, and now ſhall I be for ever exalted in my own for having diſtinguiſhed your merit. But why, my friend, this perturbation? Is it poſſible that you can heſitate? Can you entertain a doubt about how you are to proceed? Tell me, I beſeech you; to me you may ſafely intruſt the ſecrets of your ſoul; you ſhall find that I am worthy of your confidence.

"I know not what anſwer I returned, but it ſufficiently betrayed the irreſolute ſtate of my mind, and diſcovered to her how much I ſtood in need of the ſupport ſhe ſo generouſly beſtowed.

'Has your reaſon been convinced?' returned ſhe, with the moſt unſhaken firmneſs. 'Does God and your conſcience bear witneſs that it has? You cannot ſay ſo. Ah! then never, with ſuch tremendous witneſſes againſt you, will I be the

partner of your boſom. Sooner would I beg my bread with you through the world, than ſhare with you a throne purchaſed at a price ſo dear.'

" It would be injuſtice to this admirable woman, to pretend to give a minute detail of the arguments ſhe adduced to fix my wavering reſolution, and to give effect and vigour to my hitherto unſhaken principles. Far leſs can I convey any idea of the dignity and ſweetneſs of her manner, while ſhe endeavoured to ſoothe the ſtruggling emotions of my troubled ſoul; and by diſtant hope to alleviate the pangs of preſent diſappointment. Even at this diſtance of time I find the ſubject too much for me. I ſhall therefore quit it for the preſent, and renew it in my next letter. Adieu."

Second Letter of Mr. Sydney.

" MY DEAR HENRY,

" YOU expreſs ſo much impatience for the remainder of Mrs. Fielding's ſtory, that I can no longer delay to gratify your curioſity.

' You cannot imagine how I could ever enter into any other connection.'

" At your time of life the ſurpriſe is natural, and I freely pardon the reproach that is implied in it. When you arrive at my age, your notions of eternal conſtancy may, perhaps, be ſomewhat leſs ſanguine. But though the object of a firſt affection may be loſt, and time may ſo far reconcile us to the loſs, as to ſupply the vacancy by another

ther love, never will the heart become totally indifferent to the firſt object of its tenderneſs.

" It is I ſuppoſe, from a conſideration of this fact, that women, who are in general much better caſuiſts in theſe matters than we are, ſeem to be univerſally agreed in treating thoſe whom they ſuſpect of having (at however diſtant a period) once poſſeſſed a ſhare in their huſband's affections, with hatred, jealouſy, and averſion. Not ſo your excellent mother. Greatly ſuperior to the mean jealouſy of little minds, ſhe felt a peculiar complacency for every object that had ever been dear to that faithful huſband whoſe affections ſhe knew to be now her own. But to return to the promiſed concluſion of my narrative.

" Strengthened by the fortitude of my charming friend, I was enabled calmly to review the arguments that had formerly occurred to my mind upon the ſubject in queſtion. Every objection remained in full force. They might, perhaps, have been removed to me, as they have been to others, by ſome new light or ſatisfactory explanation; but I did not think myſelf at liberty upon this *peradventure* to ſtake my integrity and honour.

" In a letter to his lordſhip I gave ſuch an explanation of my ſentiments as I hoped might have proved ſatisfactory; but I was miſtaken. It muſt be a mind of no common greatneſs, that can bear to have its intentions thwarted by thoſe on whom it meant to confer obligation, and not take offence. His lordſhip felt my refuſal as ingratitude, and treated my objections as the wild dreams of fanaticiſm, or the pretended ſcruples of hypocriſy.

" The cenſures of his Lady were ſtill more ſevere; her indignation was unbounded. From

her lips I received the dreadful aſſurance, that the leaſt attempt on my part to ſee or correſpond with Miſs Fielding would be the means of ſending that young lady deſtitute into the world, and for ever depriving her of the favour of her preſent protectors. For the contumely of pride, and the bitterneſs of reproach, I came prepared to the conference; but this, this was a ſentence equally ſevere and unexpected. I however made no difficulty in engaging my promiſe never to enter into any clandeſtine correſpondence with Miſs Fielding; but the privilege of taking leave of her, either in perſon or by letter, I would by no means relinquiſh. Seeing me firm and reſolute in my purpoſe, her Ladyſhip at length gave her reluctant conſent to my writing one letter before I left Brierſton, which ſhould be delivered on my departure; but the happineſs of ſeeing her was a bleſſing which I was deſtined never more to enjoy.

"On leaving Brierſton, I returned to the univerſity of Glaſgow, and in the purſuit of ſcience ſought to obtain the reſtoration of tranquillity. My ſlender finances might have been augmented from the ſmall fund raiſed by ſubſcription for the ſupport of the ſons of our clergy; but I could not in conſcience accept of a bounty which was intended for the aſſiſtance of the indigent and the helpleſs. In my learning and talents I found a more worthy reſource.

"Under the patronage of the Profeſſors, I formed a claſs for claſſical reading, which was chiefly attended by young men of fortune, who wiſhed to facilitate the progreſs of their knowledge and information. Mr. Campbell was one of my pupils, and it was at this time that ſtrong friendſhip was cemented, which was only diſſolved by

by his death. My attachment to him would have afforded me a ſufficient inducement to accept of his propoſal of accompanying him to the Continent, without the proſpect of any pecuniary advantage; but with a firmneſs and generoſity peculiar to himſelf, he peremptorily inſiſted on my acceptance either of a large ſalary during our tour, or of a life-annuity at its concluſion; an alternative which had been formerly offered by his guardian to another gentleman. The idea of Maria Fielding ruſhed upon my mind, and I immediately accepted of the latter, in the fond hopes that it might one day be ſhared by her who was ſtill miſtreſs of my heart.

"Two years and a half had then elapſed from the period of my leaving Brierſton, nor had I in all that tedious ſpace heard one word of intelligence concerning its inhabitants. On the morning we arrived at Dover, happening to run my eye over a London newſpaper that lay on the table, my attention was arreſted by the following paragraph: 'On Tueſday laſt was married by ſpecial licence, at the houſe of Lord Brierſton, in Piccadilly, Sir William Danvers, bart. to Miſs Maria Fielding, couſin to Lady Brierſton.' I ſhall not attempt deſcribing to you my feelings upon this occaſion; they were, perhaps, beyond what the diſappointment of any earthly hope ought to have inflicted upon a rational being. Of the truth of the intelligence I could not entertain a doubt. Little did I imagine, that information given to the public in this authentic form could be a forgery! Little did I conjecture, that a wanton ebullition of female malice could have produced the wicked and accurſed lie; or that a refutation of it was to be given in the next paper. That paper, however, I did not ſee; for before

before it reached Dover, a favourable wind had wafted us to the Gallic ſhore.

"Deep, very deep, was the wound which this intelligence gave to my heart. But, thanks to the goodneſs of Providence, the wounds of the heart are not by nature intended to be indelible; nor do they ever reſiſt the healing influence of time, except when the will, acted upon by an over-heated imagination, reſiſts the ſalutary aſſiſtance of reaſon. Severe as was the conflict, I ſtruggled not in vain to teach my heart ſubmiſſion to irremediable evil. The time ſpent in our long tour aſſiſted my endeavours, and an incident which occurred on our way back to England, gave a new turn to my ideas, and preſented a new object to my affections.

"On our return from Italy, through the ſouth of France, we happened one day to be detained by accident at a ſmall village, remarkable for the ſalubrity of its air, and the poverty of its inhabitants. On taking a walk through the village, as I ſtopped at the door of one of the houſes to ſpeak to a poor creature who ſolicited my charity, I obſerved a female come out of the houſe in tears.

'She is dead!' ſaid ſhe to a perſon who met her in the ſtreet; the good lady is dead, and I believe the dear creature will die with grief too; it almoſt breaks my heart to ſee her.' The other obſerved, that "it was no wonder the poor young lady ſhould be afflicted; it was very hard to loſe both father and mother in a ſtrange country."

"I could no longer forbear enquiring into the circumſtances of a caſe that appeared ſo intereſting, and was informed that the perſon of whom they ſpake was a young lady from my own country,

try, who had accompanied her parents to the ſouth of France, which they were induced to viſit on account of the declining ſtate of the old gentleman's health: that he had died ſix weeks before; and that his widow and daughter were preparing for their return to England, when the former was ſeized with a fever, which had that morning put a period to her exiſtence.

"I was ſo much affected by the idea of the young ſtranger's ſituation, that I involuntarily advanced towards the door of her lodgings, but afraid of hurting her feelings by abruptly intruding upon her affliction, I there heſitated. I knew not, indeed, how to proceed. At length recollecting myſelf, I enquired for her maid. Alas! ſhe had no maid; ſhe had herſelf been the only attendant of both father and mother. I prevailed upon the woman of the houſe to carry up a meſſage, informing the fair mourner, that an Engliſh gentleman was below and wiſhed to ſee her. The fond remembrances that ruſhed upon her mind at this unexpected intelligence, occaſioned ſuch a powerful revulſion of feeling as to overcome her ſenſes. The fortitude that had ſupported her through all the trying ſcenes of ſorrow, now ſo entirely forſook her, that ſhe fainted away. The woman called to me for help, and I haſtily entered the apartment. How ſtriking was the ſcene that there preſented itſelf to my view! the poor afflicted girl had ſunk upon the bed that ſupported the lifeleſs body of her mother. Her cheek, pale as that of the corpſe, preſſed the clay-cold hand of her departed parent, while her ſnowy arm, thrown over the body, ſeemed in death to cling to the protectreſs of her youth. The old woman being too feeble to give any effectual aſſiſtance, I took

up

up the lovely creature in my arms, and carried her into the adjoining room, where I had at length the pleaſure of ſeeing her reſtored to life and recollection.

"Such, Henry, was my firſt interview with your dear, beloved, and ever-to-be lamented mother! Her gentle, generous, and grateful heart magnified the common exertions of humanity into deeds of extraordinary merit. I could not be unconſcious of the intereſt I had in her affections, or remain inſenſible to the value of ſuch a treaſure. By a ſympathy of taſtes, views, and ſentiments, our hearts were ſoon ſo firmly united, that the arrangements for our future life were formed without difficulty. Immediately after our nuptials we retired to my native village, where, having received ordination, I became the paſtor of my father's little flock, who I humbly hope will one day witneſs for me, that my endeavours to promote their temporal and eternal happineſs have neither been lukewarm nor ineffectual!

"I need ſay nothing of our domeſtic felicity to the dear boy who has at once ſhared and augmented every pleaſure of his parent's heart; but ſhall only hint to you, that the full value of that home-felt happineſs you have hitherto witneſſed, will not probably be truly known till a more enlarged knowledge of the world ſhall enable you to make compariſons. Then, when you behold the miſery of family diſſenſions, the heart-burnings of contention, and all the little gnawing ſorrows which oppoſition of ſentiments and difference in opinion create in the generality of houſes, you will look back to the cheerful fire-ſide of your father, and ſay, with the wiſe king of Iſrael, ſurely, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a ſtalled ox and hatred therewith."

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"On my return to England, I had forborne to make any enquiry about the ſuppoſed Lady Danvers; and the retirement in which we lived, precluded us from the poſſibility of receiving any intelligence concerning people who were in every reſpect ſo far removed from our own ſituation. When you were about five years old, I was called to the melancholy office of attending my friend Mr. Campbell in his laſt illneſs. I had been abſent about a fortnight, when your mother was one day ſurpriſed by a carriage driving up to the door. As it was the firſt that had ever ſtopt at it, ſhe was thrown into a conſiderable degree of alarm, and dreaded that ſomething had befallen me, for of a viſitor to herſelf ſhe had not the leaſt idea. A lady begged to ſee her, who was immediately admitted to the parlour. She at firſt appeared a little embarraſſed; but ſoon recovered herſelf, and with a peculiar air of ſweetneſs and affability informed my wife, that ſhe was a near relation, and had formerly been an acquaintance of her huſband's, and having been accidentally led to that part of the country, could not reſiſt the inclination ſhe felt of introducing herſelf to the partner of his affections, and embracing his little family. You ſoon caught her attention, and the ardour with which ſhe preſſed you to her boſom, while tears ſtole from her eyes, convinced my wife that ſhe had a more than ordinary intereſt in him from whom you ſprung.

"May I," aſked my wife, with heſitation, "May I enquire the name of the lady who does my boy ſo much honour?"

'My name is, I ſuppoſe, quite unknown to you, Madam. *You* never, I dare ſay, heard of Maria Fielding?'

"Is

"Is it, then, Lady Danvers that I behold?" returned my wife, in aſtoniſhment.

'No,' ſaid Miſs Fielding, equally aſtoniſhed at ſuch a ſuppoſition, 'my name never has, nor ever will be changed.'

"A mutual explanation immediately took place. I need not tell you, how affecting to both theſe amiable women ſuch an explanation muſt neceſſarily be. Equally noble, and equally generous, the ſympathy of their affections ſerved but to endear them to each other. Aſſured that my abſence was ſtill to be prolonged for another fortnight, Miſs Fielding frankly accepted of my wife's invitation to remain with her for a few days; and in that time made her the confidante of all that had befallen her ſince the hour of our ſeparation. When they parted, it was with mutual regret, ſoftened by the promiſe of punctual correſpondence.

"Soon as Miſs Fielding's carriage was out of ſight, you flew to your mother to ſhew her a pretty book with which ſhe had preſented you, when, at her deſire, you had crept up to the carriage to give her another parting kiſs. On opening it, a paper dropped out, addreſſed to *Maſter Henry Sydney*; it contained two bank-notes for a hundred pounds each, and theſe words—*An annual gift from the moſt affectionate of friends to the child of her adoption.* You know the punctuality with which this annuity has ever ſince been paid, but you do not know the difficulty I made to accept of it, or the delicacy of the methods employed by this generous woman to reconcile me to the thoughts of *my* ſon's becoming the object of her bounty. We at length compromiſed the matter; I giving my conſent to your receiving the annuity till you had finiſhed your education; and Mrs. Fielding

Fielding promiſing on her part to withdraw it as ſoon as you were eſtabliſhed in a profeſſion.

"I ſhall now ſatisfy your curioſity with regard to all that befel Miſs Fielding from the period of my leaving Brierſton:—

"When I ſo raſhly credited the report of her marriage, I did not ſufficiently conſider the nature of love in ſuch a breaſt as that of Maria Fielding's. In a mind like hers, this pure and delicate ſentiment exalts the object of its attachment ſo far above the reſt of the human race, that the idea of all that is deſerving of eſteem, admiration, or affection, becomes aſſociated with its form. Mere paſſion is in its nature fickle and tranſitory, but an attachment ſuch as I have deſcribed will bid defiance to time; and though it may ſubmit to the control of reaſon, will, long after all the *paſſion* with which it was firſt connected has been obliterated, retain its influence over the breaſt. The woman who can *ſuddenly* and *lightly* change the object of her affections, may make what pretenſions to ſentiment and delicacy ſhe pleaſes, but is in reality the ſlave of paſſions modeſty would bluſh to own.

"Not ſuch was the pure and affectionate heart of Maria Fielding. In vain, after my departure did Lady Brierſton load me with epithets of reproach, and endeavour to influence the mind of her couſin in my diſfavour. She, with modeſt firmneſs, perſiſted in juſtifying my conduct, which, ſhe candidly confeſſed, had not only gained her approbation, but rivetted her eſteem. The confeſſion of continued regard for me, was conſtrued by her Ladyſhip into inſolence and ingratitude; it aggravated her harſhneſs, and rendered the capricious petulance of a temper, arrogant by nature, and callous from proſperity, every day more and more

more intolerable. All this Miſs Fielding continued to endure with that chriſtian meekneſs which blunts the arrows of malignity, and is the only true ſhield againſt the inſults of the proud, and the ſneers of the ſcornful. Inſtead of bemoaning the ſituation that ſubjected her to the bitterneſs of dependence, ſhe conſidered it as an opportunity afforded by Providence for extending her knowledge of the human heart; and exerted herſelf to improve it into an increaſing fund of wiſdom and virtue.

" Happy the mind,
" That can tranſlate the ſtubbornneſs of fortune
" Into ſo quiet and ſo ſweet a ſtyle!"

" Notwithſtanding the contempt which her Ladyſhip affected for the underſtanding of her couſin, ſhe yet frequently felt herſelf obliged to yield to its aſcendancy. This aſcendancy was invariably made uſe of by Miſs Fielding to promote the intereſts of the humble children of poverty, whoſe ſituations ſhe frequently had it in her power to repreſent in ſuch a light as procured for them that relief which may be wrung from unfeeling affluence by addreſſing its pride, when application would be made in vain to its charity.

" This conſideration would, probably, have retained Miſs Fielding at Brierſton, had not her refuſal of the addreſſes of Sir William Danvers inflamed the reſentment of her Ladyſhip to ſuch a height, as rendered their ſeparation inevitable. She then retired to a ſmall village in the neighbourhood of ——, where ſhe was received as a boarder into the family of a reſpectable farmer.

" Even here ſhe found means of employing her time to the advantage of the little circle by which ſhe was ſurrounded. By her inſtructions ſhe improved

proved the young; by her ſympathy ſhe conſoled the unfortunate; and by her example of unrepining patience, humility, and piety, ſhe edified all who came within the ſphere of her obſervation. To raiſe a little fund for deeds of charity, ſhe had recourſe to her pen; and in this retirement ſhe compoſed ſeveral little treatiſes, chiefly intended for the benefit of her own ſex, and calculated to reſtore that intellectual vigour which the whole courſe of their preſent mode of education tends ſo effectually to deſtroy.

"Thus did ſhe, by the exertions of a ſuperior mind, tranſmute evil into good; and in a ſituation in which moſt of her ſex would have indulged in a liſtleſs and low-ſpirited deſpondency, continue to give dignity to herſelf by the employment of her faculties, while ſhe promoted the virtue and the happineſs of others.

"From this place ſhe was recalled by the accounts of the melancholy ſituation of Lady Brierſton. Her Ladyſhip, now in the ſecond year of her widowhood, had, by a paralytic ſtroke, entirely loſt the uſe of one ſide, and was become ſuch an object of compaſſion, that the delicate nerves of her *friends* were too much ſhocked to bear the ſight of her diſtreſs. She was, indeed, no ſooner incapable of contributing to the amuſement, or flattering the vanity of her former aſſociates, than ſhe found herſelf deſerted and forlorn. Even the formal enquiries by which ſhe was for ſome time mocked, were by degrees neglected; and ſhe was left, without the conſolation of beholding one pitying tear ſhed over her calamity, to the care of mercenaries, and the comfort of her own reflections.

"In a heart like Miſs Fielding's, the ſufferings of a fellow-creature never fail to annihilate the feelings

feelings of reſentment. On the wings of gratitude and affection ſhe flew to the conſolation of her former benefactreſs. She attended her with unceaſing aſſiduity through the remaining tedious courſe of her diſorder; bore with unſhrinking patience the peeviſhneſs of a bad temper, rendered ſtill more iraſcible by the preſſure of diſeaſe; and cheerfully complied with all the whims and caprices to which a mind weakened by ſuch a malady is ſubject.

"At length the death of her noble kinſwoman releaſed her from this very painful ſituation, and ſhe was preparing to return to her former retirement; when, very unexpectedly, on examining her Ladyſhip's will, it was diſcovered that the aſſurances ſhe had from every quarter received of having been cut off from all ſhare in her fortune, were without foundation; but that, on the contrary, ſhe was left ſole heireſs of all her great poſſeſſions.

"Of the uſe ſhe has made of the noble fortune thus bequeathed her, you have heard too much of her deeds of charity to be ignorant. May the prayers for her life that are every day put up from the grateful hearts of the indigent and afflicted, aſcend to the throne of the Moſt High! and long may ſhe continue to bleſs the world by her example, and to furniſh it with a living inſtance of the efficacy of *fixed* and *ſteady* principles of virtue!

"Adieu, my deareſt Henry. God bleſs you, and make me ſenſible of the bleſſing he has in you beſtowed on your affectionate father,

H. S.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

"Deep vers'd in books, and ſhallow in himſelf."
MILTON.

THE hour of dinner at Mrs. Fielding's had juſt been reported by the hall clock, as Henry Sydney knocked at the door. He found his patroneſs in the drawing-room, ſurrounded by a ſelect party of friends, to all of whom ſhe particularly preſented him. Dinner being then announced, the company moved to the parlour, where it was ſome time before the attention due to her gueſts permitted Mrs. Fielding to addreſs her young friend. At length ſhe took an opportunity of enquiring whether he had ſeen the lady from W——, who had that morning enquired for him at her houſe?

"You greatly aſtoniſh me, Madam!" ſaid Henry; "I know of no lady from W——, nor have I been at my lodgings ſince twelve o'clock."

'Did the lady leave any meſſage for Doctor Sydney?" enquired Mrs. Fielding.

"No, Madam," anſwered the ſervant, "ſhe neither left any meſſage, nor would ſhe give her name; though the ſecond time ſhe called, I told her that as Doctor Sydney was to dine here, ſhe might depend on my punctually delivering either."

'She then called twice,' ſaid Henry. 'How do you know, Mr. Wetherſby, that ſhe came from W——?'

"She ſaid ſo herſelf," returned the butler; and that ſhe need not leave her name, as you, ſir, would not fail to diſcover it by the power of *tender ſympathy*."

The

The confuſion of Henry was not a little augmented by obſerving the univerſal ſimper occaſioned by theſe words. Mrs. Fielding herſelf could ſcarcely forbear laughing: ſhe, however, would not add to the evident diſtreſs of Henry, by giving way to the impulſe. The ſame delicacy did not operate upon Mr. Sardon, the gentleman who ſat oppoſite to Henry, who looking earneſtly in his face, exclaimed, "And by the power of tender ſympathy Dr. Sydney has diſcovered it. Oh, a pariſh-certificate could not have deſcribed the fair lady in language more intelligible! But pray, ſir, is this the common ſtile of your viſiting-cards in the country."

Henry replied in ſome vexation, 'that really his queſtion was as unintelligible as the lady's meſſage; he confeſſed he could comprehend neither the one nor the other.'

"No," returned Mr. Sardon; "and have you really no ſort of gueſs who the dear creature is? Are there, then, ſo many from whom you would expect a ſimilar meſſage? What a happy man you are!"

'Upon my honour,' returned Henry, (whoſe earneſtneſs to clear himſelf made the affair appear ſtill more ridiculous) 'I declare I have not the leaſt conception of who the lady is—and ſuppoſe it will all turn out to be a mere miſtake.'

"Poor lady!" cried Mr. Sardon, "ſhe little thought that eight and forty hours of London air could deſtroy the power of *tender ſympathy* ſo effectually!"

In this manner did Mr. Sardon continue to amuſe himſelf at the expence of Henry, during the time of dinner; juſt as the deſert was put upon the table, a hackney-coach ſtopped at the door. "Ah," ſaid Mr. Sardon, obſerving how anxiouſly

anxiouſly Henry liſtened to the voices in the hall, "I ſee, Doctor, the tender ſympathies are not quite extinguiſhed; they were only dormant—but ſpring to life at the knock of a hackney-coachman —as I live, here ſhe comes!"

At that moment the voice of Miſs Botherim diſtinctly reached the ears of Henry, who heard her ſaying to the ſervant as he offered to conduct her to another room. 'I tell you I will go to him wherever he is, and have no objection to ſee Mrs. Fielding.' Petrified with aſtoniſhment he beheld her enter, when, after making a formal curtſey at the door, ſhe immediately made up to him, ſaying, 'So, I have found you out at laſt!' The diſtreſs of Henry, as ſhe approached towards him, is not to be deſcribed. He involuntarily ſhrunk from her approach. 'I knew you would be ſurpriſed,' ſaid ſhe, in a tone of tenderneſs; 'you were not prepared for the pleaſure of ſeeing me ſo ſoon.'

"The pleaſure is indeed very unexpected," ſaid Henry, in great confuſion. "Pray is Mrs. Botherim in town?"

'She in town!' cried Bridgetina, 'no, no; but I ſhall reſerve all the intereſting particulars of my leaving W——, for your private ear, in the mean time pray introduce me to Mrs. Fielding.'

Henry would rather have undertaken a journey to the Antipodes, but perceiving the aſtoniſhed looks of his patroneſs, he thought it beſt to loſe no time in announcing to her who Miſs Botherim really was.

Mrs. Fielding, whoſe politeneſs flowed from a deeper ſource than the eſtabliſhed rules of etiquette, and the fictitious forms of ceremony, received Miſs Botherim not only with good-breeding, but with that complacency which is the offspring of good-nature. The very ſtrange appearance of Miſs

Miſs Botherim, the deformity of her perſon, the fantaſtic ſingularity of her dreſs, rendered more conſpicuous by the ſtill ſtranger ſingularity of her manners, were to her benevolent heart ſo many motives to pity, and ſeemed alike to claim her compaſſion and protection. The abruptneſs of her intruſion ſhe attributed to ignorance, and the extraordinary mode of her addreſſing Henry to ſimplicity, neither of which were, in her eyes, ſubjects of ridicule; whoſe only true province ſhe conſidered it to be to expoſe the arrogant pretenſions of vanity, and to unmaſk the inſidious deſigns of ſophiſtry and deceit. She ordered a chair for Miſs Botherim near her own, to the great relief of Henry, who was not a little aſhamed of his very unwelcome viſitor, whoſe unexpected appearance he was totally at a loſs to explain. The behaviour of Mrs. Fielding gave the ton to her gueſts, ſome of whom were very much inclined to indulge their riſibility at the appearance of Miſs Botherim, till the ſtile of Mrs. Fielding's reception convinced them of the impropriety of ſuch a behaviour. Mr. Sardon, indeed, could not forbear ſlily congratulating Henry on his uncommon felicity, and when the ladies retired, he ſtill more unmercifully rallied him upon his enviable conqueſt.

Bridgetina, whom total want of obſervation rendered unconſcious of any breach of the eſtabliſhed forms and cuſtoms of ſociety, felt no pain from either baſhfulneſs or embarraſſment. She did not wait for an invitation to accompany the ladies to the drawing-room; but bent upon the proſecution of her plans with regard to Henry, ſhe reſolved without ceremony to remain at Mrs. Fielding's the reſt of the evening.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fielding knew not what to make of her; ſhe was diſtreſſed at the poor girl's thus expoſing herſelf to the deriſion of her gueſts, but ſo unwilling to hurt her feelings, that ſhe could not bring herſelf to wear the appearance of wiſhing for her departure. The gentlemen very ſoon followed the ladies to the drawing-room, where the circle was enlarged by additional viſitors, it being an evening on which Mrs. Fielding was always known to be at home.

Henry was extremely vexed at perceiving Miſs Botherim ſtill of the party. Taking care to place himſelf at as great a diſtance from her as poſſible, he entered into immediate converſation with the perſon next him, avoiding to look the way ſhe was; and though her eyes were fixed upon him from the moment of his entrance, happily for Henry no one could poſſibly follow their oblique glances to the object on which they darted their moſt tender beams.

"You are fond of the country, I preſume, Madam;" ſaid Mr. Sardon, placing his chair by Bridgetina. "I am greatly miſtaken, if you will find the ſociety of London at all congenial to your feelings."

'Why ſo, Sir?'

"Becauſe it is ſeldom agreeable to a perſon of refined ſenſibility."

Bridgetina drew up her head, with a look of much approbation. Mr. Sardon continued: "In ſhady groves and purling ſtreams there is ſomething ſo ſoothing to a ſuſceptible mind, ſo——'

'A mind of great powers, Sir,' ſaid Bridgetina, bridling, and interrupting him, 'is ſuperior to the operation of phyſical cauſes. It is in no caſe to be influenced by ſurrounding objects. *A perſon of talents, in the midſt of the moſt crouded ſtreet,*

can give full ſcope to his imagination. I make no doubt, you, Sir, who appear to be poſſeſſed of no common abilities, have experienced the truth of this. Have you not *laughed, and cried, and entered into nice calculations, and digeſted ſagacious reaſonings, and conſulted by the aid of memory the books you have read, and projected others for the good of mankind, while taking a walk from Charing Croſs to Hyde-Park Corner*;* and done it too as much at your eaſe as in the middle of your ſtudy?'

"Really, Madam, I cannot ſay that I have."

'No! Then I am miſtaken in your character.'

"Perhaps," rejoined Mr. Sardon with a ſmile, "the miſtake is mutual; but I ſhould be glad to know from what inſtance you do me the honour to infer me capable of ſuch complete abſtraction?"

'From no particular inſtance, but merely becauſe ſuch employment of the mind is common to every man of talents in walking the ſtreets. *The dull man, indeed, goes ſtraight forward; he obſerves if he meets with any of his acquaintance; he enquires reſpecting their health and their family; he glances at the ſhop windows, and ſees ſhoe-buckles and tea urns.* But a man of genius obſerves none of his acquaintance, makes no enquiries reſpecting their health or their families, looks at no ſhop-windows, nor ſees either buckles or tea-urns, ſhould they be ever ſo much in his way.'

"Bravo!" cried Mr. Sardon; "What an excellent criterion by which to judge of genius! But did you not ſay ſomething about laughing and crying?"

'Oh

* See Godwin's Enquirer.

'Oh yes,' returned Bridgetina, 'I ſaid the man of talent, in walking the ſtreet, gives full ſcope to his imagination. He laughs and cries. *Unindebted to the ſuggeſtions of ſurrounding objects, his whole ſoul is employed. In imagination he declaims or deſcribes; impreſſed with the deepeſt ſympathy, or elevated to the loftieſt rapture.*'*

Mr. Sardon was aſtoniſhed at the fluency of her expreſſion. He began to conſider her as a very extraordinary character, and willing to purſue the converſation, expreſſed himſelf highly ſatisfied with her very accurate delineation of the different ways in which a dull man and a man of genius employed themſelves while walking the ſtreets. He then begged to know how they were to be diſtinguiſhed in the country. Here, alas, Bridgetina was ſoon run aground. She had gone to the very end of her leſſon; and was running away from the ſubject in a very unaccountable manner, when it was taken up by a lady near her, who had attentively liſtened to the converſation.

'I know not how to account for it,' ſaid Mrs. Mortimer, 'but I have generally remarked that men of diſtinguiſhed talents, who have always reſided in the country, ſeldom deign to be agreeable in converſation; while in town, one daily meets with men of the firſt-rate abilities, who ſeem ſo totally unconſcious of their own ſuperiority, that one is neither pained by their reſerve, nor mortified by their condeſcenſion.'

"You do not conſider, my dear Madam," ſaid Mr. Sardon, "that the value of a commodity riſes in proportion to its ſcarcity. The greateſt ſcholar in the pariſh is too extraordinary a perſonage to demean himſelf after a common manner. When

* See Enquirer.

he deigns to ſpeak, every word is a law, and every ſentence the *ipſe dixit* of infallibility. And would you expect ſuch a ſage as this to deſcend to chit-chat with a lady?"

'Oh, it is when he *deſcends*, that he offends me moſt,' rejoined Mrs. Mortimer. 'I could bear the moſt pompous diſplay of his learning far better than the arrogance of his ſtupid and affected reſerve, or the conceited air with which he lets himſelf down to the level of a female underſtanding.'

"The obſervation of Mrs. Mortimer (ſevere as it is) may, perhaps, be often applicable to mere ſcholars," ſaid Mrs. Fielding; "but I believe it will ſeldom be found deſerved by men of refined taſte, or real genius, however remote their ſituation. The cultivation of taſte beſtows a poliſh upon the mind, that ſeldom fails to form the manners to urbanity; but upon the whole, I muſt allow, that men of ſuperior talents or information are generally much improved by mutual colliſion."

'I never mind the learned bears, for my ſhare,' ſaid a young lady who ſat by Bridgetina. 'What I deteſt in the country is, the coterie of cenſorious old maids, eſtabliſhed in every little town, who are everlaſtingly making their ill-natured remarks upon all that paſſes.'

"Permit me to rectify your miſtake," ſaid Bridgetina; "and to inform you, that the cenſure of which you complain is the very perfection of human reaſon; and the perſons who exerciſe it are the enlightened friends of the human race. When laws are abrogated and governments diſſolved, theſe old maids, whoſe cenſures are, from the depraved ſtate of a diſtempered civilization, rendered unpalatable to a multitude of the

preſent

preſent race of mankind, will keep the whole world in a moral dependence upon reaſon. Nor will old maids be then permitted to make a monopoly of cenſoriouſneſs. A cenſure will then be exerciſed by every individual over the actions of his neighbour; a promptneſs to enquire into and judge them, will then be univerſal;* and every man will enjoy the advantage of deriving every poſſible aſſiſtance for correcting and moulding his conduct, by the perſpicacity not of a few ſolitary old maids only, but of all his neighbours. Oh, happy time! Oh, bleſſed æra of felicity!"

'Oh wiſe, judicious, and enlightened maidens!' cried Mr. Sardon, 'who have given the world ſuch convincing proofs of the efficacy of cenſure, as have enabled the philoſopher to make an eſtimate of its value! How greatly are mankind indebted to the accuracy of your obſervations, and the curious minuteneſs of your reſearch!'

Though Mr. Sardon ſpake this in a tone ſufficiently ironical, Bridgetina, totally unconſcious of the irony, was much delighted with having ſuch a champion to ſupport her; and was taxing her memory for another harangue, when looking up, ſhe obſerved Henry Sydney ſlipping out of the room.

"Doctor Sydney, Doctor Sydney," cried ſhe, out of breath with terror and perturbation, "you do not, I hope, intend to go away?"

'I am obliged to go, Madam;' returned Henry, ſtill receding.

"What! leave me without one tender interchange of congenial ſentiment! without giving me an opportunity of diſburthening my full

* See Pol. Juſ. vol. ii.

heart of one of the many thouſand, thouſand things I had to ſay!"

"If you leave your addreſs, I ſhall do myſelf the honour of waiting on you before you leave town;' ſaid Henry, haſtily opening the door, and making his retreat as quickly as poſſible.

"Before I leave town!" repeated Bridgetina, following him to the head of the ſtairs. "And is this like your proteſtations of affection? Is this conduct in uniſon with the ardour of your declaration of fervid love?"

Henry had reached the firſt landing-place, but at theſe words he turned. 'Miſs Botherim,' ſaid he rather ſternly, 'this is not the firſt time that you have ſeemed to make a point of teizing me. I muſt now, once for all, deſire to know what your extraordinary conduct means?'

"Ah! Henry, too charming Henry, it is your conduct that is extraordinary; mine is the natural reſult of deep inveſtigation, and the true principles of morals. Though you had never diſcloſed your paſſion, I ſhould have followed you to town all the ſame; I——"

'Heavens! Miſs Botherim, what is it you mean?' exclaimed Henry, who now ſaw with horror the miſtake into which he had been betrayed. 'You follow me to London, and follow me on pretence of my having diſcloſed a paſſion for you! A paſſion for *you*, Miſs Botherim; I really have not patience for any thing ſo abſurd.'

"And can you deny all that you ſaid at our laſt tender interview at the farm? What is become of that charming morbid exceſs of ſenſibility and tenderneſs, with which you then confeſſed the fervour of your fierce conſuming flame? Oh, how greedily I abſorbed the delicious poiſon

ſon that flowed from the ſoft tongue of tender love! Oh!———"

'Miſs Botherim, this is really too ridiculous. I well remember when we laſt met, that I was weak enough to ſuffer myſelf to be led into a confeſſion of my attachment, not for you indeed, but for one with whoſe ſentiments you pretended to be intimately acquainted. It is impoſſible, utterly impoſſible that you could apply any thing I then ſaid to yourſelf. The ſuppoſition is too injurious to your underſtanding. Why then purſue me in this manner? Why perſiſt in tormenting me?'

"And is it, then, not with me that you are in love after all? How can I believe it *compatible with the nature of mind, that ſo many ſtrong and reiterated efforts have produced no effect?* Is it poſſible that you can intend to leave me a comfortleſs, ſolitary, ſhivering wanderer, in the dreary wilderneſs of human ſociety? Ah! cruel Henry!"

'Really, Madam, if you take my advice, you will not long remain in the wilderneſs of London. You ſhall have my hearty wiſhes for your good journey back to the country. Pray ſhall I now deſire Mrs. Fielding's footman to call a coach to take you home to your lodgings?" Without waiting for her permiſſion, he inſtantly called the footman, and telling him to conduct Miſs Botherim into the parlour till he could fetch her a coach, he hurried off in ſpite of her earneſt entreaties to prolong the conference. It was fortunate for Bridgetina that Henry had preſence of mind enough to prevent her return to the drawing-room, where ſhe certainly would have done her utmoſt to expoſe both herſelf and him.

She no ſooner heard the hall-door ſhut upon Henry than ſhe threw herſelf into a chair, and to uſe her own expreſſion, gave a vent to the high-wrought frenzied emotions of her troubled ſpirit. She bitterly bemoaned her unparalleled misfortunes, to which ſhe applied every epithet in the vocabulary of ſentimental miſery, and was ſtill ſtruggling with the full tide of melancholy emotions, when the ſervant returned with the coach, "Tell Mrs. Fielding," ſaid ſhe to the footman, as he attended her to the coach; "tell her that I ſhall ſee her to-morrow, when I will repoſe my ſorrows in her friendly boſom."

'Did you drop your boſom-friend, Ma'am?' ſaid the footman, who thought he had not righly heard her. 'Give me leave to fetch it.'

"Ah! you cannot fetch him!" ſaid Bridgetina, heaving a deep ſigh; "he will not come for you; he is hard and impenetrable as the marble rock; but I ſhall find a way to ſoften the obduracy of his flinty heart!"

The footman ſtood aghaſt; and when ſhe told the coachman to drive to Charing-Croſs, 'Better drive to Bedlam, I think!' exclaimed he; 'for ſure I am, many honeſt ſouls are put in there not half ſo mad!'

CHAP. VII.

HENRY Sydney, extremely anxious to exculpate himſelf to Mrs. Fielding from having any concern in the intruſion of Miſs Botherim, impatiently hurried through the buſineſs of the morning, and preſented himſelf at Hanover-ſquare before three o'clock.

"Your

"Your coming is very apropos," ſaid Mrs. Fielding, "as I was juſt going to ſend for you. But, bleſs me! how very much fatigued you look; from your appearance one might ſuppoſe you had not been in bed ſince I ſaw you laſt."

'I muſt own I have had a ſleepleſs night, though I was in bed the uſual time,' replied Henry; 'but as I have, ſince leaving it, paid my reſpects to half the governors of the hoſpital, and been as far as Hackney and Homerton to deliver letters of introduction, my jaded appearance may be well accounted for. I ſhould, indeed, have gone home to dreſs before I did myſelf the pleaſure of waiting on you, had I not been impatient to make ſome apology for the extraordinary viſit of Miſs Botherim.'

"It was on this very account I wiſhed to ſee you," returned Mrs. Fielding. "She has been with me half the morning, and I muſt confeſs has not a little ſurpriſed me by what ſhe has communicated."

'I know not what ſhe has communicated to you, Madam,' ſaid Henry; 'but I know I never was more aſtoniſhed in my life than at her appearance; and, indeed, can neither account for that nor any part of her behaviour in any other way, than by ſuppoſing a degree of mental derangement.'

"If it be madneſs, yet there is method in it," rejoined the lady. "Bizarre as ſhe evidently is, and ridiculous as many of her notions appear to me, I muſt acknowledge, that if the account ſhe this morning gave me of your conduct be founded in truth, you appear to me to have acted in a very indefenſible manner."

'It wounds me to the ſoul to find that you, Madam, can believe me capable of acting in a re-

prehenſible manner in any inſtance; but with regard to Miſs Botherim I ſolemnly aſſure you—'

"I need no aſſurances as to your intentions, Dr. Sydney; I can readily believe that you never meant any that were ſerious with regard to Miſs Botherim, but I fear—I fear you are not to be ſo eaſily acquitted of the crime of amuſing yourſelf with her credulity: a crime, which, however light and trifling it may appear, is in reality the very height of cruelty and injuſtice."

"Believe me, it is a conduct I have ever reprobated. You, Madam, cannot hold it in more abhorrence than I do. But had I even been inclined to practiſe it, Miſs Botherim is the laſt woman in the world whom I ſhould have thought of for furniſhing amuſement in any way.'

"You may certainly think I have no right to catechiſe you; but you muſt pardon me for putting you in mind of the laſt converſation you had with her before you left the country. Am I to believe that what ſhe told me was all her invention?"

Henry coloured, heſitated, took up Mrs. Fielding's work-bag, examined the embroidery, opened, and then drew the ſtrings; opened, and drew them again; then haſtily throwing it aſide, I can give you no anſwer, Ma'am, that will not convict me of folly, credulity, and preſumption. Yet as I would rather bear the imputation of weakneſs, then be thought capable of the conduct Miſs Botherim has aſcribed to me, I ſhall frankly confeſs to you, that I ſuffered myſelf to be betrayed by her into a miſtake which—which——'

"I perceive that the ſubject grows painful to you, and ſhould be very ſorry to diſtreſs you. I ſhall only, before we call another, beg leave to aſſure you, that it was not with a view to gratify

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an idle and impertinent curiosity that I introduced it. I am truly sorry for the dilemma into which you have drawn yourself; and in spite of her folly, cannot help being sorry for the poor girl, who is, indeed, likely to be the greatest sufferer. I hope, however, you have not gone so far as to wound your honour by retracting."

'You, if you please, Madam, shall yourself be judge ——I have scarcely ever met with Miss Botherim since my return to W——, without receiving some obscure hint of her knowledge of the situation of my heart. "The galled deer winces," and I shall not conceal from you, that I could not deny the justice of her suspicions. I frequently met the lovely girl, who ever has, and ever will be the sole object of my affections, in her company. And, though I cautiously endeavoured to conceal my heart-felt preference, found I had not done it so effectually as to escape the penetration of Miss Botherim. I contrived to parry her attacks upon the subject of my passion, till the day before I left W——; when, on hearing of my design of coming to London, she so roundly taxed me with cruelty in leaving one who was deservedly dear to me, in a state of suspense, that she extorted from me an avowal of my love, and a detail of the reasons that had hitherto sealed my lips upon the subject.'

"But how could Miss Botherim take this to herself?"

'As to that, Madam, Miss Botherim alone can tell. Happily the conversation passed in the presence of a third person, who, I make no doubt, will exculpate me from saying a word to Miss Botherim, that credulity itself could construe into any thing beyond bare civility. My weakness, in having been duped into believing her the confi-

dante

dante of a woman of uncommon ſenſe and penetration, it is not ſuch an eaſy matter to vindicate.'

"That I may not be led into a ſimilar miſtake with poor Miſs Botherim," ſaid Mrs. Fielding, ſmiling, "I muſt beg to know the lady's name who is likely to be the innocent cauſe of ſo much miſchief."

'Oh, that I could have the honour of introducing her to you, not only by name but in perſon,' returned Henry. 'Young as ſhe is, and inferior as ſhe may be deemed in point of ſituation, I glory in the proud certainty that you would in her's acknowledge a kindred mind.'

"The greateſt compliment that I have received theſe twenty years, without doubt;" replied Mrs. Fielding, bowing. "To be thought to have any reſemblance to a young man's miſtreſs, is an honour for which I cannot be too grateful. But you have not yet told me who this paragon is."

'Her name is, I believe, unknown to you. She is the rector of W——'s eldeſt daughter.'

"Daughter to Dr. Orwell?"

'Yes; the ſame.'

"I remember the Doctor well. He was only in deacon's orders at the time of my father's death, but had for three months done duty as his curate. He was a young man remarkable for piety and learning, and an excellent preacher; is he not?"

'Without appearing to aim at the graces of oratory, he poſſeſſes its eſſentials, and I believe was never heard with indifference. His ſermons are of a piece with all his actions; they bear the ſterling mark of ſound wiſdom, unaffected piety, and genuine benevolence.'

"What

"What fortune does he give to his daughter?"

'His private fortune is, I believe, nothing; and his living (in order to avoid all disputes with his parishoners) he put it out of his power to raise. It is little more than three hundred a year; out of which he cannot be supposed to have saved much for his family.'

"And pray, Sir what right had you to fall in love with any lady without a fortune?"

'Alas! no right. But how is it possible to shield the heart from the admiration of excellence? Conscious, however, that a knowledge of my affection could but serve to involve the object of it as a sharer in my distress, in case I should have the misfortune of passing any considerable length of time unestablished in my profession, I determined to keep the secret locked within my bosom, till a tolerable prospect of success should enable me to reveal it without the imputation of temerity or presumption.'

"Mighty heroic, to be sure! And pray, were your looks and actions equally well guarded as your lips?"

'It is impossible for me to answer for them. In spite of my endeavours, perhaps, it was sometimes impossible to avoid betraying a preference so strongly felt.'

"And so you could play with this poor girl's feelings; to gratify the inclination, or rather the vanity of the moment, you could excite her tenderness by a behaviour which might convince her of your decided partiality; and after having insidiously betrayed the affections of a grateful heart, you can satisfy your conscience, because, forsooth, you never spoke of love! Oh, Brutus is an honourable man!' So are ye all—all honourable men!"

Henry

Henry looked ſomewhat embarraſſed. After a ſhort pauſe, he reſumed the converſation. "If I had not preferred her happineſs to my own,' ſaid he 'I ſhould certainly not have left W—— without endeavouring to engage her hand. But in my ſituation, what right had I to do ſo?'

"Then, my good friend, you had ſurely no right to behave in ſuch a manner, as to give her reaſon to believe herſelf miſtreſs of your affections. Looks and actions are frequently as unequivocal as words. Where they are known, and intended to be ſo, I do not ſee why in honour they ought not to be deemed as binding."

'With pleaſure ſhould I ratify every engagement mine have ever made; but, alas! far from having any reaſon to conclude that my attentions have made any impreſſion on her heart, I have now much cauſe to fear that ſhe will never liſten to my vows.'

"Have you ever made the experiment?"

'In the belief that to Miſs Botherim ſhe had confeſſed ſome ſentiments in my favour, (for ſo, fool that I was, did I conſtrue what fell from that bundle of abſurdity) I flew to Harriet, with a full intention of laying open to her my whole heart. She received me with her uſual ſweetneſs; but when I would have talked of love, ſhe abſolutely refuſed to hear me, and having called her father, left me with a cold aſſurance of her continued friendſhip.'

"And pray, if ſhe had liſtened to you, what would have been the conſequence? Years may elapſe, before your profeſſion enables you to maintain a wife in a ſtile of common decency. If you think of marrying till you are at leaſt in poſſeſſion of a clear five hundred a year—I cannot help being your relation—but remember, you

are

are no longer to reckon me in the number of your friends."

The ſolemn and poſitive manner in which Mrs. Fielding pronounced theſe words, ſeemed to prohibit all reply. Henry deeply ſighed, and was ſilent. After a ſhort pauſe, Mrs. Fielding, reſuming her uſual tone of affability, again reverted to the ſubject of Miſs Botherim, in which ſhe had not far proceeded, when the entrance of ſome viſitors put a ſtop to the converſation, and gave Henry an opportunity of retiring. He immediately proceeded to his lodgings, which he entered with a heavy heart. He was ſo wrapt in thought, that it was a conſiderable time ere he perceived that two letters lay for him upon the table. One was directed by his ſiſter's hand; with the other he was unacquainted. He gave the preference to the former, precipitately broke the ſeal, and read as follows.

CHAP. VIII.

" Is there in human form that wears a heart,
" A wretch, a villain, loſt to love and truth,
" That can with ſtudy'd, ſly, enſnaring art
" Betray ſweet Julia's unſuſpecting youth?
" Curſe on his perjur'd arts! diſſembling, ſmooth!
" Are honour, virtue, conſcience, all exil'd?
" Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
" Points to the parents, fondling o'er their child,
" Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their diſtraction wild!"
BURNS.

" *To Henry Sydney, M. D.*

" MY DEAREST BROTHER,

" SURELY the poſt was this morning much longer coming in than uſual. I thought it never would have arrived. The long-wiſhed-for ſound of the little urchin's horn no ſooner gave notice of his approach, than I threw on my ſhawl, and flew down to the poſt-office to demand the expected letter. I might as well have ſtaid at home; for the bag could not be unſealed till the poſt-maſter had made an end of dipping. I was almoſt ſuffocated with the ſteams, but there in the little box cribbed from a corner of the tallow-chandler's ſhop, and dignified with the name of *Poſt-Office*, did I ſtand for half an hour, till the maſter of the ceremonies, begreaſed from head to foot, appeared. Naſty as he was, I believe I could have kiſſed him for my letter if he had given it me immediately; but quite inſenſible to my impatience, there did the wretch ſtand taking out letter by letter, ſpelling and putting together the

the names on every ſtupid ſcrawl, till at length, and at the very bottom of the bag, he pulled out your epiſtle in his dirty paw.

"That's mine!" cried I; "that's my brother's letter!"

'Stay, Miſs, till I read the direction;' ſaid he, wiping his ſpectacles with the moſt provoking compoſure. 'To Miſs—Miſs, Sydney—Sydney; aye, I believe it is your's.'

"I threw down the poſtage, ſnatched it from his hand, and haſtily ran over the contents. Then, returning to my father, I enjoyed the ſweeteſt of all pleaſures—that of talking of the deareſt object of my affection to one to whom the ſubject is no leſs grateful, no leſs intereſting, than to myſelf.

"I hope we are not too ſanguine with regard to your proſpects, when we pronounce them more than tolerable; but upon this ſubject your father intends to write you more at large; and to him I ſhall leave the ample diſcuſſion of your plans, contenting myſelf with hearty wiſhes and ardent prayers for their ſucceſs—Happy am I in the heart-felt aſſurance that it is not in the power of time or abſence, of proſperity or adverſity, no, not even of that general damper of brotherly affection—a wife, to deprive me of the place I hold in my deareſt brother's love.

"Apropos, of a wife. You cannot imagine how I have been alarmed by this ſtrange unaccountable girl, Miſs Botherim, who yeſterday evening very gravely aſſured me you had paid your addreſſes to her. I at firſt thought ſhe was only in jeſt, but ſhe continued to inſiſt upon it ſo ſeriouſly, that I confeſs ſhe made me very uneaſy. I went to Harriet Orwell, to conſult her upon the ſubject, and was indeed much relieved

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by her endearing ſympathy. She felt for me as if the caſe had been her own. Indeed, if you had been her own brother, ſhe could not have been more affected. But what friend muſt not have felt concern at the thoughts of your throwing yourſelf away? Forgive me, but I really am not yet quite eaſy on the ſubject, and beg you will give me a full explanation of it in your next. I am called down to Harriet, who comes to take me out, ſo muſt bid you adieu till to-morrow; when, in the language of noveliſts, I ſhall reſume my pen.

"I do not wait for to-morrow. I cannot. My heart is too full. And as I know my ſpirits are at preſent too much agitated to permit me to ſleep, I ſhall try if by writing I cannot weary them into a ſtate of greater tranquillity.

"O Henry, what a ſcene have I juſt now witneſſed! Poor Captain Delmond! you may imagine better than I can deſcribe the agony of his ſoul, when I tell you that he has loſt his daughter! Yes, poor Julia is, as I greatly fear, loſt to herſelf and to her friends for ever.

"On going down to Harriet Orwell, I found ſhe wiſhed me to accompany her to the farm to enquire for Julia; we immediately ſet out, but had not advanced many ſteps when we were met by Mrs. Gubbles, who informed us that Julia was expected home; and that it was indeed probable ſhe might already have arrived at her father's. We then thought it proper to change our route, and turned down to Capt. Delmond's. The Captain heard our voices in the hall, and ſent down old Quinten to beg us to walk up to the dining-room, where we found him ſitting in his wheeled chair, giving directions to the ſervants

vants about placing a new ſopha which had been juſt brought home, intended, as he told us, for the accommodation of Julia. 'The dear girl may, perhaps, be fatigued from her little journey,' ſaid the fond and anxious father; 'and ſhe may here repoſe herſelf without depriving us of the pleaſure of her company.' He then made us walk into his dreſſing room, which you know looks into the garden; there a field bed had been put up for Julia, to ſave her the trouble of going up and down ſtairs; and of that, and all the other little arrangements made for her reception, we were obliged to give our opinion, and highly did we delight him by our approbation. Mrs. Delmond was then out at market; ſhe was to go for Julia after dinner, when the Captain intreated we would return to him, and by our preſence add to the pleaſure poor Julia could not fail to experience, in returning home after ſo long and melancholy an abſence.

"We did not heſitate to accept of the old gentleman's invitation, and went a little after five o'clock. With the Captain we found young Mr. Churchill, in whoſe carriage Mrs. Delmond was gone for Julia. He appeared little leſs intereſted than the Captain in the return of the fair invalid, and liſtened with no leſs aſſiduity for the ſignal of her approach. At length Quinten opened the dining-room door with a joyful countenance. "The carriage is coming, ſir; I ſee it; 'tis turned the corner of Job's field, and will be here in a minute." Capt. Delmond was in the middle of a ſentence but could not proceed. He claſped his hands and liſtened, looking towards the window with an earneſtneſs of expectation and pleaſure, that it is impoſſible to deſcribe. The carriage rattled along the pavement. 'They

ſhould

ſhould not drive ſo quick,' cried the Captain; 'they will ſhake the poor girl to pieces.'

"Mr. Churchill flew down ſtairs, as the carriage drove up to the door. Harriet followed him; I too involuntarily aroſe, but on a moment's reflection, returned to the Captain, whom I thought it would be cruel in us all to leave, and reſumed my ſeat beſide him. The dining-room door was left open, ſo that we could diſtinctly hear all that paſſed below.

"The firſt ſound that reached our ears was the voice of old Quinten, exclaiming in the moſt melancholy accent, "Good God! what is become of my young miſtreſs? Where is Miſs Julia? Why is ſhe not returned?"

"Captain Delmond ſunk back in his chair. 'Oh! they have deceived me! cried he, in the moſt ſorrowful voice; 'my dear girl is not well enough to come home. Alas! I ſee ſhe has been worſe—much worſe than they ever told me!'

"I would have aſſured him he was miſtaken, but my attention was attracted by the voice of Mrs. Delmond. What ſhe ſaid was too much broken by ſobs to be diſtinctly heard. I trembled with apprehenſion and anxiety, but could not leave the unhappy father in order to ſatisfy myſelf. He pulled the bell again and again, but no one anſwered. It ſeemed as if every one was afraid of approaching him; too ſure a proof of how unwelcome were the tidings they ſo much dreaded to announce. At length Quinten appeared; but oh, how altered was the expreſſion of the old man's countenance! When he attempted to ſpeak, his pale lips quivered with a ſort of convulſive motion, and the big drops chaſed each other down his weather-beaten cheeks.

'On

'On your peril let me know the worſt!' ſaid Captain Delmond, in a voice ſcarcely articulate. 'Is Julia ill? Is ſhe dying?'

"Oh, no, thank God! ſhe is not ill; but—but—ſhe is gone off!"

'Gone off! How? Where? With whom?'

"Gone off to London, I ſuppoſe," returned Quinten; "with a ſweetheart, 'tis moſt likely. Heavens grant he may be made of true ſtuff; and then all may be well again, pleaſe your Honour, ſoon."

"Captain Delmond raiſed his hands and eyes to heaven, and threw himſelf back into the chair in ſpeechleſs agony. Quinten proceeded: "Don't let your Honour take it ſo to heart. Miſs is indeed gone off without leave; but what then? If ſhe has done half as well as your lady her mother did, when ſhe ran off with your Honour, no one need pity her."

"Captain Delmond took no notice of what he ſaid; he did not even ſeem to hear him, but haſtily enquired why he did not ſee his wife? Quinten then confeſſed, that his miſtreſs was ſo ill as to be obliged to be carried into the parlour. Leaving Quinten with his maſter, I then ran down ſtairs to enquire after Mrs. Delmond; who, as I entered the front parlour, was juſt recovering from a violent hyſteric fit. She was ſenſible only for a few minutes, when ſhe relapſed into another more ſevere, and of longer duration than the former. Had it not been for the judicious and well-directed endeavours of the dear ſenſible Harriet, I queſtion whether it might not have been nearly fatal. Soon as I beheld her open her eyes, I flew back to Captain Delmond, to inform him of her recovery. 'You are very good, my dear,' he ſaid in a ſort of hollow voice;

'you,

'you, I hope, will never be the murderer of him who gave you being.'

"Tears now for the firſt time found their way to the afflicted father's eyes; he wept bitterly. I ſtood in ſilence by his ſide; for what comfort had I to offer him? Could I deſire him not to feel the wound that pierced his ſoul? Could I palliate the offence of her who had fixed the keen dart of anguiſh in a father's heart? Impoſſible! The attempt would have been impertinent as vain. I thought it beſt to let the firſt ſtrong emotion have free courſe, and out of reſpect to his feelings, I after a little time again went down to Mrs. Delmond. While I was on the laſt ſtairs, a heavy ſigh from the back parlour attracted my attention. I then for the firſt time recollected Mr. Churchill, and on opening the parlour door, I there found him ſitting; his elbows reſting upon the table, and his claſped hands ſupporting his forehead. I ſtood for a minute before he obſerved me; and when he looked up, "Mr. Churchill," ſaid I, without ſeeming to notice his confuſion, "in what diſtreſs has this raſh ſtep of Julia's involved this unhappy family! Poor Captain Delmond! I do not think he will ever get the better of it."

'What a wretch I am,' cried he, 'in ſuch a caſe to think only of myſelf! I will go to Captain Delmond. But what can I ſay to comfort him? Is not Julia gone? Is ſhe not the prey of a villain? Ah! Julia, it is not my happineſs alone that thou haſt deſtroyed; thine, thine too, is gone for ever! Heaven knows with what care I ſhould have cheriſhed it. Oh, Miſs Sydney, you know not how dear this charming creature was to my heart! For her alone I prized this acceſſion of fortune, that is now become to me a vile thing,

of

of no earthly uſe. For her—but you will ſcorn me for this weakneſs—let me go to her father.' So ſaying, he paſſed me, and with ſlow ſteps proceeded to the dining-room, while I went to Mrs. Delmond.

"I found her better, but ſhe did not ſpeak till after ſome time, when Quinten came down to beg, that as ſoon as ſhe was able ſhe might go up ſtairs to his maſter. "What will become of me!" ſaid ſhe; "oh, Miſs Orwell, how ſhall I meet my poor huſband! How ſhall I tell him the particulars of this ſad affair!" She then threw herſelf on Harriet's neck, and wept in ſuch a manner, that I feared ſhe would have relapſed into another fit. Indeed, I never ſhould have believed that Mrs. Delmond could have felt ſo ſtrongly on any occaſion whatever. But I ſee there are wounds which the moſt apathetic muſt feel; ſorrows which touch the boſom of the moſt inſenſible.

"We would have had her to go up alone, but ſhe inſiſted upon our accompanying her. When we entered the dining-room, your friend Churchill, pale and agitated, was leaning on the Captain's chair, in vain endeavouring to conceal the emotion that ſwelled his heart. Captain Delmond attempted to ſpeak, but his voice was choaked, and the words died away upon his lips; he held out his hand to his wife; who bathed it with her tears; we made her ſit down beſide him; but a conſiderable time elapſed before either could find utterance to the ſenſations that oppreſſed their ſouls.

"At length Captain Delmond begged to have a minute detail of all the circumſtances concerning the event they ſo much deplored; and Mrs. Delmond, compoſing herſelf as much as poſſible, proceeded

proceeded to relate, 'that the laſt time ſhe had been to ſee Julia, ſhe was ſurpriſed to find that fellow Vallaton with her.'

"Vallaton!" exclaimed Capt. Delmond; "Is it then that villain, that infernal villain, who has ſeduced my child! A married man, too! O diſtraction!—If there be vengeance in heaven, it will ſtrike him—proceed no further. I cannot bear it. My heart-ſtrings are cracked already." He heaved a convulſive groan, and I actually thought would have inſtantly expired. We with difficulty prevailed on him to taſte of ſome cordial, which having a little revived him, he deſired Mrs. Delmond to proceed.

"She related, that at the time above-mentioned ſhe thought the behaviour of Julia extremely ſlighty and odd; but that conſidering Vallaton in the light of a married man, ſhe entertained not the leaſt ſuſpicion of him; though now that ſhe looked back upon all that paſſed, ſhe wondered at herſelf for being ſo very blind. 'But how could I imagine,' cried ſhe, 'that ſuch a girl as Julia, ſo virtuous, ſo modeſt as ſhe has ever been, ſo far from any forwardneſs or levity, ſhould yet be capable of ſuch vile wickedneſs? Oh, that I had died before ſhe ſaw the light! Little did I think, that ſhe, who was the pride of my heart, ſhould live to become a curſe to her that bore her!'

"Here poor Mrs. Delmond was again obliged to ſtop; and Julia's maid Nancy having come into the room, I took the liberty of hinting to Captain Delmond that the particulars he wanted might be learned of her, without putting Mrs. Delmond to the pain of recital.

"She accordingly was called, and briefly ſtated, that Mr. Vallaton, (who had, ever ſince

Miſs

Miſs Botherim was with Julia, been her daily viſitor) came in a poſt-chaiſe at nine that morning, and on ſtepping out, told her (Nancy) that he was come to fetch Miſs Delmond home. He aſked if her clothes were packed? She told him no; for that Mrs. Delmond had informed her Miſs was not to be ſent for till the afternoon; but that ſhe could put them up in a quarter of an hour. He deſired her to make haſte, and then went into the parlour to Miſs Delmond, who was dreſſed, and ready for breakfaſt. She took in the tea-kettle ſome minutes after, and obſerved her young miſtreſs in tears. Mr. Vallaton was ſpeaking to her in a low voice, as if ſoothing her (or, in Nancy's own words, coaxing her) to do ſomething ſhe did not quite approve. She could not diſtinctly hear all that he ſaid, but the words *general utility*, *right reaſon*, and *true philoſophy*, frequently met her ear; and once, in anſwer to ſomething that Julia ſeemed to urge concerning her father, Mr. Vallaton expreſſed his wonder that ſhe had not got the better of ſuch *fooliſh prejudices*. Then turning to Nancy he again bade her make haſte, and put nothing up at preſent but Miſs Delmond's clothes, as every thing elſe would be ſent for afterwards. When all was ready, he took Julia's hand to lead her to the carriage, but ſhe had not advanced many ſteps, when ſhe grew ſick, and was obliged to have hartſhorn and water twice before ſhe could proceed; at length Vallaton took her up in his arms, and lifted her in, jumping in after her; he deſired Nancy to follow, and they drove off.

"To her great ſurpriſe, when they came to the croſs, inſtead of going on to W——, they turned into the London road. Julia then wept violently, and Vallaton, (the villain!) putting his

arm round her waiſt, ſpoke to her in a low and ſoothing voice; he ſpoke in French, ſo that Nancy knew not what he ſaid. When they arrived at ——, he told Julia ſhe need not leave the carriage, as freſh horſes were ready to be put to it immediately, and that he ſhould ſpeak to the landlord to take care of Nancy till the arrival of the ſtage-coach, when ſhe ſhould be taken back to the farm.

"And is my miſtreſs not to go back to W——?" cried the poor girl, in an agony of grief. "Oh, do not let me leave you, my dear young lady. Pray take me with you; I will attend you whereever you go, and I will go with you to the very world's end, if you will but permit me to ſerve you."

"Julia leaning over her to Vallaton, who had by this time ſtepped out of the carriage, 'Do, my good friend,' ſaid ſhe, (while the tears fell from her eyes) 'do permit her to go with us—pray do. I ſhall want her aſſiſtance, and ſhould be glad to have her with me. It would be a comfort to me—indeed it would.'

"I tell you, my love," returned the wretch, "it is impoſſible; there are a thouſand reaſons againſt it. Come," ſaid he, taking the girl's hand, and pulling her out of the carriage, "you only teize your miſtreſs by your prate." Then dragging her into a parlour, he told her ſhe muſt return to the farm by the ſtage-coach, and there wait the arrival of Mrs. Delmond, who would take her home in the evening.

'And what am I to ſay to my miſtreſs?" cried Nancy. 'How ſhall I look her in the face, after what has happened?'

"And what has happened?" returned the wretch fiercely. The reſt of his ſpeech was too much

much above Nancy's comprehenſion to enable her to detail it with exactneſs; ſhe only knew it was about *the prejudices of ſociety*, and that he called her maſter *an old licenſed murderer*; and ſaid, that 'it was Julia's duty to prefer his happineſs to her father's, and that they were going to enlighten the world."——Such was the ſubſtance of Nancy's narration, which received many interruptions from the croſs queſtions and bitter exclamations of the heart-wounded parents.

"When ſhe had finiſhed, a ſilence of ſome minutes enſued, which was only interrupted by the deep ſighs of Mrs. Delmond. The feelings of her huſband ſeemed too acute for utterance; but in his countenance the agony of his ſoul was pourtrayed in colours ſtronger than imagination can paint, or it is in the power of words to deſcribe. The recollection is engraven on every fibre of my heart; and when I attempt to ſleep, (which I have done for ſome hours ſince I began this) the figure of the unhappy father ſwims before my eyes, and harrows up my ſoul.

"Mrs. Delmond, though ſhe continued for the moſt part to weep in ſilence, could not forbear now and then to utter a reproachful exclamation againſt the ingratitude of Julia. "Good God! that ſhe ſhould ſuffer herſelf to become the prey of ſuch a wretch, a low fellow whom nobody knows! a man who is not, perhaps, even in the rank of a gentleman!" Theſe exclamations called forth a fearful burſt of paſſion from the lips of Captain Delmond. 'Let not the villain think he ſhall eſcape my vengeance!' cried he, in a voice of frantic rage; 'I ſhall purſue the baſe-born ſcoundrel, I ſhall make him anſwer for his villainy! I—'

"The recollection of his own enfeebled and helpleſs ſtate then ruſhed upon his mind, and cruſhed his ſpirit to deſpair; he ſunk back in his chair and burſt into a flood of tears.

"Churchill eagerly ſeized his hand. "Permit me, ſir," cried he, "to purſue the villain, give me your authority, and be aſſured you ſhall have a ſpeedy account of him."

'And I too!' cried Quinten, all panting with eagerneſs. 'Permit me to attend his honour, and old as I am I may be of ſome ſervice. I ſhall let him know what it is to call an honeſt ſoldier, that fights for his King and country, a licenſed murderer. The cowardly thief! the ſneaking, ſmooth-tongued ſcoundrel! He muſt have dealt with the devil to bewitch my dear young lady; ſo wiſe as ſhe was, and ſo dutiful!'

"Mr. Churchill again urged his requeſt, and taking the emphatic ſqueeze which Captain Delmond gave his hand for a token of approbation, he flew down ſtairs, mounted his ſervant's horſe, and ordering him to follow on one from the carriage, he rode off before any plan had been concerted for the conduct of his enterprize. Pray heaven he may not ſuffer from the generous forwardneſs of his gallant ſpirit!

"Oh, Julia, how have you thrown away your happineſs! In the affections of Charles Churchill you might have been bleſſed indeed! But poor, infatuated girl! what ſtore of miſery have you not prepared for yourſelf? When an awakened conſcience tells you what you have inflicted on the authors of your being; when the remembrance of their thouſand, thouſand tender offices, their fond anxieties, their never-ceaſing cares of love, ſhall tinge with deeper hue your black ingratitude, how muſt it ſting your ſoul!

"Alas,

" Alas, Henry, while young, we little think—

" How ſharper than a ſerpent's tooth it is,
" To have a thankleſs child!"

But what ſhall we ſay to this ſort of philoſophy, which builds the fabric of morals on a direliction of all the principles of natural affection, which cuts the ties of gratitude, and pretends to extend our benevolence by annihilating the ſweet bonds of domeſtic attachment? Should this ſyſtem prevail,—" Relations dear, and all the charities of father, ſon, and brother," would ſoon be no longer known. O for the ſpear of Ithuriel, whoſe potent touch made the lurking fiend appear in his proper ſhape, when, as I ſuppoſe, in the form of falſe philoſophy, he attempts to inſtil into the heart of Mother Eve—

" Diſtemper'd diſcontented thoughts,
" Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate deſires,
" Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride."

" May we, my dear brother, never ſuffer ourſelves to be ſeduced from the plain path of piety and peace: may the bleſſing of our heavenly Father knit the bonds of our affection on earth, and at length re-unite us a family of love in heaven!

Adieu! Your's moſt ſincerely,
MARIA SYDNEY."

" P. S. I have juſt heard that Miſs Botherim has likewiſe gone off to London. Surely, Harry —but it is impoſſible—you can have no intereſt in her. Yet I cannot help being very much diſturbed by this intelligence. For heaven's ſake, write immediately. I hope in GOD you can clear yourſelf; if not, O Harry, how miſerable! but I can-

not, will not ſuppoſe it. Poor Mrs. Botherim is quite beſide herſelf. Captain Delmond too is, I hear to-day very ill. The gout is flown into his ſtomach, and the ſymptoms appear dangerous. Should he die, what muſt be the feelings of Julia! Your father will write to-morrow. He and Dr. Orwell have both been with Captain Delmond all the morning.—Once more adieu!"

Henry did not read his ſiſter's letter without experiencing a conſiderable degree of emotion. Hoping the other might give him ſome further information on the ſubject that had employed his ſiſter's pen, he haſtily opened it, and caſting his eye to the end, ſaw the name of Bridgetina Botherim. He pronounced an emphatic *phoh!* and threw it down; but recollecting that ſhe might poſſibly know ſomething of the elopement of Julia, in whoſe fate he was moſt ſincerely intereſted, he again took it up, and read as follows:

"YOU tell me I have no ſhare in your affection. You even hint that you love another; but you are miſtaken if you think this makes any alteration in the decided part I have taken. No:—I have reaſoned, I have inveſtigated, I have philoſophiſed upon the ſubject; and am more than ever determined to perſevere in my attacks upon your heart. The deſire of being beloved, of inſpiring ſympathy, is congenial to the human mind. I will inſpire ſympathy; nor can I believe it compatible with the nature of mind, that ſo many ſtrong and reiterated efforts ſhould be made in vain. *Man does right in purſuing intereſt and pleaſure. It argues no depravity. This is the fable of ſuper-*

*superstition.** My interest, my pleasure, is all centered in your affections; therefore I will pursue you, nor shall I give over the pursuit, say what you will. I know the power of argument, and that in the end the force of reason must prevail. Why should I despair of arguing you into love? Do I want energy? Am I deficient in eloquence? —No. On you, therefore, beloved, and ah! too cruel Henry, on you shall all my energy and all my eloquence be exerted; and I make no doubt that in the end my perseverance shall be crowned with success. It is your mind I wish to conquer, and mind must yield to mind. Can the mind of my rival be compared with mine? Can she energize as I do? Does she discuss? Does she argue? Does she investigate with my powers? You cannot say so; and therefore it plainly follows she is less worthy of your love.

"The apprehension of embarrassment with regard to fortune may be another obstacle that you may haply start. But this, like wise, I can obviate. Read the inclosed; and you will perceive that there is a scheme on foot, which will accelerate the progress of happiness and philosophy through the remotest regions of the habitable globe. Fly this dismal, dirty hogsty of depraved and corrupt civilization; and let us join ourselves to the enlightened race, who already possess all those essentials which philosophy teaches us to expect in the full meridian of the Age of Reason. Let us, my Henry, in the bosom of this happy people, who worship no God, who are free from the restraint of laws and forms of government, enjoy the blessings of equality and love. You will not then need to look blank and disconsolate when you

* See Emma Courtney.

hear of the health of your friends.' 'Pain, ſickneſs, and anguiſh, will not then be your harveſt;' nor will you then, as now, 'rejoice to hear that they have fallen on any of your acquaintance.'* There are no phyſicians among the Hottentots.—There you ſhall enjoy the bleſſing of leiſure; and the powers of your mind, not blunted by application to any particular ſcience, ſhall germinate into general uſefulneſs. Oh, happy time! and in that time happy, thrice happy, ſhall be your

BRIDGETINA BOTHERIM."

CHAP. IX.

——"His ſpeech was an excellent piece
"Of patch-work, with ſhreds brought from Rome and from Greece;
"But ſhould poets and orators try him for theft,
"Like the jack-daw of old—would a feather be left?"

SIMKIN'S LETTERS.

THE admirable epiſtle of our thrice-admirable heroine, with which we thought it proper to conclude the laſt chapter, was left by her at Henry's lodgings, on her way to Mrs. Fielding's. On her return from Hanover-ſquare, ſhe, in purſuance of her adopted plan, went to look for lodgings in the ſame ſtreet in which Henry had taken up his abode. Her attempt was unſucceſsful.

Not a houſe in George's-ſtreet would receive her.

Her

* See the Characteriſtics of a Phyſician, in the Enquirer.

Her attack upon the heart of Henry was from this unfavourable circumſtance prevented from being turned into a blockade; but ſtill ſhe reſolved to carry on the ſiege; and happily for her purpoſes, on turning by chance into Conduit-ſtreet, ſhe found a lodging exactly ſuited to her wiſhes. She fixed upon the firſt-floor, and aſked the price."

"Two guineas a week, Ma'am, is the very loweſt at which theſe lodgings were ever let."

'Two guineas a week!' cried Bridgetina, in aſtoniſhment. 'What! a hundred and four guineas a-year for two paltry rooms. You muſt be miſtaken, good woman; I ſhall convince you that you are. In my mother's houſe at W——, for which ſhe pays no more than twenty pounds a-year, there are ſeven better rooms than theſe! Do not think I am to be ſo eaſily impoſed upon.'

"If you can ſuit yourſelf cheaper elſewhere, I have no objection, Ma'am," returned the miſtreſs of the houſe, drily; "but I believe," added ſhe, "you will find few ſuch lodgings at the price (conſidering the ſituation) in London."

The ſituation was indeed deſirable; not that Bridgetina would in itſelf have conſidered it as preferable to Hound's-ditch, or even to any of the noble avenues of Wapping; but its being in the vicinity of Henry gave it a value beyond all price. Finding it in vain to argue the good woman out of any part of her demand, ſhe cloſed with her terms, and told her ſhe ſhould take immediate poſſeſſion of the apartments. Mrs. Benton curtſeyed, and after a little modeſt heſitation, informed Miſs Botherim, that ſhe made it a rule never to take any lodger without a reference for their character to ſome perſon of reſpectability.

"Mrs. Benton, for that I think is your name, I perceive you are a very unenlightened perſon," ſaid Bridgetina. "A regard to the character of any individual is one of the immoral prejudices of a diſtempered ſtate of civilization. I ſhall ſoon inſtruct you better; and out of the choice writings of the moſt illuſtrious modern philoſophers, convince you that there is no notion more erroneous than the falſe prejudice entertained againſt certain perſons of *great powers*, who have happened to energize in a direction vulgarly called vicious. I, for my part, think it one of the peculiar advantages of this great metropolis, that it happily affords to the philoſopher an opportunity of cultivating an intimacy with liberal-minded perſons of this deſcription; and ſhall be much obliged to you for an introduction to any heroine who has nobly ſacrificed the bauble—reputation. Pray have you any acquaintance in this line?"

Mrs. Benton ſtared—'I really do not underſtand you, Ma'am. My acquaintances are all people of unſpotted reputation. Nor, though my lodgings ſhould ſtand empty throughout the year, would I admit any perſon of ſuſpected character into my houſe. I do not mean to inſinuate any reflection upon you, Ma'am; but you are a ſtranger to me, and therefore I muſt again requeſt a reference.'

"You are really ſtrangely invulnerable to argument; but I hope I ſhall in time convince you of your miſtake. Meanwhile you may apply to Mrs. Fielding, in Hanover-ſquare, the only perſon I have yet viſited in London; and as ſhe is as much the ſlave of prejudice as yourſelf, her teſtimony will, I dare ſay, pleaſe you."

'Oh, Ma'am, if you viſit Mrs. Fielding, I am more than ſatisfied. To be honoured with her acquaint-

acquaintance is a ſufficient recommendation to me. She is the beſt, the moſt generous of women! To her goodneſs I am indebted for every comfort that I now enjoy. I ſhould be baſe, indeed, if I did not with gratitude acknowledge that ſhe has been the ſaviour of me and mine.'

"Gratitude is a miſtaken notion, Mrs. Benton; and if you feel any extraordinary regard towards Mrs. Fielding, on account of her being your benefactreſs, you act in direct oppoſition to the principles of juſtice and virtue."

'What! Not feel gratitude to my benefactreſs! Not feel a regard for her who reſcued my huſband from a priſon! Who, like a miniſtering angel, brought relief to our extreme neceſſity! Who ſaved my babes from periſhing, and has put us in a ſituation to earn our bread with comfort and with credit! O, if ever I ceaſe to bleſs her, may tenfold miſery be my portion!'

"I perceive you have imbibed all the pernicious prejudices of ſuperſtition; but notwithſtanding your miſtaken notions, I dare ſay you are a good ſort of woman at bottom; and ſo I ſhall tell Mrs. Fielding, when I go to breakfaſt with her to-morrow morning."

Mrs. Benton curtſeyed; and Bridgetina, deſiring a coach to be called, ſtepped into it, and drove to the Golden-Croſs for her things. Having paid her bill, and counted her remaining ſtock of caſh, ſhe found there was only one guinea and a half left; which having reſtored to her purſe, ſhe returned to Conduit-ſtreet, where ſhe found her apartment diligently prepared by Mrs. Benton for her reception.

As ſhe had not given any orders about dinner, Mrs. Benton naturally concluded it was her intention to dine abroad; while Bridgetina, never accuſtomed

cuſtomed to pay any attention to the affairs of life, and ignorant of all the manners and habits of ſociety, had taken it for granted that food was to be included with her lodging. At five o'clock, finding ſhe could energize no longer, ſhe pulled the bell, to enquire whether dinner was ready.

'Dinner! Ma'am?' ſaid the maid-ſervant who attended her; 'I did not know that you were to have any. I received no directions to make market for you.'

"No!" returned Bridgetina; "I perceive, then, that your miſtreſs has conceived too exalted an idea of my *powers*. In the preſent ſtate of ſociety, no one's energies can be ſo effectually exerted as to elude the phyſical neceſſity of eating. I therefore deſire to have my dinner immediately."

The demand which followed for money to go to market, brought on an explanation by no means agreeable to Bridgetina, and which very little ſuited the ſtate of her finances. After a learned expoſtulation on the part of our heroine, and a plain ſtatement on that of Mrs. Benton, it was finally ſettled, that the maid ſhould hereafter make proviſion for Bridgetina's meals; which were to be fixed to no regular hour, but taken *philoſophically*,* at what time the energies of her ſtomach required it.

"You will ſay it is more convenient for you, that I ſhould dine at your table," ſaid Miſs Botherim; "and probably quote the example of the Spartans, who, by a law of the immortal Lycurgus, were obliged to common meals. But when the progreſs of mind ſhall have carried us further on the road to perfection, all co-operation in butchery, in cookery, or in eating, ſhall be at an

* See Pol. Juſ. vol. ii. p. 492.

end.

end. If, at that happy period, the animal oeconomy ſhould ſtill continue (notwithſtanding the advanced ſtate of ſociety) to demand a ſupply of food, every man will then, when he is hungry, knock down an ox for himſelf, and cutting out his own ſteak, will dreſs and devour it at the time and place beſt ſuited to his avocation and circumſtances. Do you think the Gonoquais ſit down to table, as we do? No, no; ſocial meals (as they are vulgarly called) are an interruption to the ſublime flights of genius, and ought to be diſcountenanced by every true philoſopher."

In this manner did Bridgetina endeavour to enlighten her humble and modeſt auditor; whoſe ſilence ſhe interpreted into profound admiration of her extraordinary powers of eloquence, and on whoſe mind ſhe firmly believed every word ſhe ſpoke made a deep and laſting impreſſion.

On the following morning, according to appointment, ſhe attended Mrs. Fielding at breakfaſt; when, to her great mortification, inſtead of meeting with Henry, as ſhe had fully expected, ſhe received from his reſpectable friend a very warm expoſtulation on the impropriety of her conduct; which, though delivered with all poſſible gentleneſs of voice and manner, kindled in her mind the flame of deep reſentment.

In vain did Mrs. Fielding endeavour to perſuade her to return to W——. In vain did ſhe urge the duty ſhe owed her aged mother; the riſque ſhe ran of expoſing her character to reproach, and her name to ridicule, by perſiſting in a conduct ſo utterly inconſiſtent with the laws of delicacy and decorum. Bridgetina was like the deaf adder, 'which refuſeth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely.' Mrs. Fielding was the ſlave of prejudice; her mind was fettered by ſuper-

ſuperſtition; her morals were built upon the falſe ſtructure of religious principle. She looked to a future world for that ſtate of complete order, happineſs, and perfection, which ſhe weakly believed would never be found in this. She was not enlightened enough to conceive how the progreſs of mind could be accelerated by caſting off all dependance on a Supreme Being, by contemning his power, or denying his exiſtence; but on the contrary, adored his goodneſs, revered his wiſdom, and firmly believed in his revelation. How, then, could ſhe fail to be the ſcorn of our deep and enlightened philoſopher! In truth, Bridgetina felt for her underſtanding the moſt ſovereign contempt; and after an harangue, which had too little of novelty in it to afford the reader any amuſement, ſhe took her leave of the weak and prejudiced Mrs. Fielding, fully reſolved never more to honour a perſon ſo full of prejudices with her confidence.

Her next attempt was to obtain a conference with Henry. She was informed by his ſervant that he was not at home. Leaving her addreſs, and deſiring the man to tell his maſter that ſhe ſhould be at home all the evening, ſhe ſtepped into a hackney-coach, and drove to the houſe of Sir Anthony Aldgate, in Mincing-lane.

Here, alſo, her evil ſtars ſeemed to preponderate. The knight, his lady, and daughter, were on a viſit to Mr. Deputy Griſkin, at his villa at Bow-Bridge, and were not expected home till the latter end of the week. This was very unwelcome intelligence to Bridgetina. Sir Anthony had been by her father's will appointed truſtee for her fortune, which conſiſted of four thouſand pounds ſtock in the four per cents, the whole of which was to continue under his management till the day

of

of Bridgetina's marriage; with power, however, to ſell, or change the ſecurity, (with her conſent) as might appear moſt eligible.

It was her intention to raiſe an immediate ſupply of five hundred pounds for her own expences; and to put five hundred more into the hands of Mr. Vallaton, as treaſurer for the Gonoquais emigrants, with a promiſe of doubling the ſum, ſhould the ſubſcription of the philoſophers appear inadequate to the expences of the expedition.

Great was her vexation at the delay occaſioned by Sir Anthony's abſence, which not only protracted the glory ſhe expected to reap from the applauſes of the enlightened, but reduced her to the mortification of remaining for ſeveral days with an empty purſe. O cheerleſs companion of philoſophy! too well do we know the torpedo effects of thy chilling aſpect: too often have we experienced the ſickening languor which the contemplation of thy long, lank ſides occaſions, to refuſe our ſympathy to the luckleſs wight who has thee for a gueſt! Thy caſual appearance is a trifling evil, but where thy form is permanent, thou art

> " Abominable, unutterable, and worſe
> " Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
> " *Gorgons*, and *Hydras*, and *Chimeras* dire."

In all the calamities to which life is liable, there is no comfort equal to that which ariſes from being able to fix the blame upon that which has occaſioned, or is ſuppoſed to have occaſioned it. In the opinion of many wiſe men, it is one of the chief advantages of matrimony, that in every croſs accident, a conſtant reſource of this nature is provided for in the help-mate of the party aggrieved. Even the vexation ariſing from the loſs of a game

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at cards is conſiderably alleviated by the privilege of finding fault with the play of a partner; ſo to Bridgetina was it no ſmall conſolation, that in her preſent perplexity ſhe could relieve her mind by bitter invectives againſt the *diſtempered ſtate of civilization*. Had it not been for the preſent depraved inſtitutions of ſociety, her father would not have had it in his power to make a will. She would not then have been fettered by the impertinent interference of this truſtee; who had, indeed, by his management during her minority, conſiderably increaſed the capital of her little fortune, and thus, by adding to the wealth of an individual, had ſinned againſt the glorious ſyſtem of equality.

Her ſoliloquies upon this ſubject were not interrupted by any viſitor. Henry did not appear; neither did he ſend any anſwer to her letter. She again wrote, but to no purpoſe. She repeatedly called at his lodgings, but ſtill he was not at home. Another letter, conjuring him to enter into her arguments, and either reply to them on paper, or come to reaſon the ſubject with her in a perſonal interview, met with no better ſucceſs than the former. Henry remained inexorable.

Mrs. Fielding had, at his requeſt, informed Bridgetina, that as it was impoſſible for him to anſwer her but in a way that muſt appear harſh and diſagreeable, he begged leave to decline writing. In muſing on this ſubject, and inveſtigating in her uſual method the motives of Henry, and the conduct of his patroneſs, it all at once occurred to her that Mrs. Fielding herſelf was the object of Henry's purſuit; and that it was in order to get rid of a rival, that that lady had ſo ſtrongly preſſed her return to the country. The longer her imagination dwelt upon all the circumſtances which had occurred, the more ſtrongly was ſhe impreſſed with

with the truth of her ſuſpicions. The glaring diſparity in point of age was in her mind no obſtacle, neither did ſhe make any account of that nice propriety of ſentiment and of conduct which marked the character of Mrs. Fielding, and rendered her eminently ſuperior to the ſuſpicion of weakneſs or abſurdity. That ſhe was attached to Henry, ſhe thought was evident; and that ſhe ſhould wiſh to marry him was not (in her opinion) at all extraordinary. She therefore determined to change her plan, and to exert all her energies to perſuade Mrs. Fielding that ſhe ought in juſtice to reſign her pretenſions to one, who, by her ſuperior powers, was more eminently qualified to promote the happineſs of a deſerving individual. She would immediately have written, but apprehenſive that Mrs. Fielding, following the example of Henry, would leave the letter unanſwered, ſhe thought it better to diſcuſs the ſubject in a perſonal interview; and ſet out for Hanover-ſquare with all poſſible expedition.

As ſhe entered the ſquare, Mrs. Fielding's carriage drove from her door; ſhe however proceeded to knock, and had the door opened to her by a maid-ſervant, from whom ſhe learned, that Mrs. Fielding was not expected home till near dinner-time.

"Would ſhe be at home in the evening?"

'Yes; but in the evening ſhe was to have a party.'

This intelligence was extremely agreeable to Bridgetina, as ſhe doubted not that Henry would be of the number of Mrs. Fielding's gueſts, of whom ſhe alſo determined to make one; nor did the want of an invitation appear to her any obſtacle, as that was a mere matter of form, which ſhe thought might very eaſily be diſpenſed with.

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It was now that Bridgetina for the firſt time felt the abſence of her mother, who had from her cradle ſupplied the place to her of maid, milliner, and mantua-maker; and though the good woman's fond wiſhes of ſetting off the perſon of her daughter to the beſt advantage were but ill ſeconded by her taſte, her officious zeal had rendered the object of her affections ſo unaccuſtomed to do any thing for herſelf, that ſhe was helpleſs as a baby. Her only reſource was to conſult Mrs. Benton, whom ſhe accordingly ſent for; and after telling her ſhe was to go that evening to a party at Mrs. Fielding's, intreated her aſſiſtance in the neceſſary preparations. Mrs. Benton very good-naturedly offered to do every thing in her power; and propoſed ſending immediately for a hair-dreſſer, as really ſhe could not help obſerving that Miſs Botherim's hair ſtood very much in need of cutting.

Bridgetina replied, that "all unneceſſary co-operation was vicious, and that as Mrs. Benton and her maid had both offered their voluntary aſſiſtance, ſhe would by no means purchaſe the ſervice of a mercenary. Beſides," added ſhe, putting her hand to her forehead, and gently introducing her fingers betwixt her ſkull and the high frizzled locks that towered above, "my hair is much more eaſily dreſſed than you imagine. See, (cried ſhe, taking off the wig) theſe curls want only a little combing, and then, as they are ſomewhat ſtiff, they muſt be well ſmoothed down with hard pomatum, and covered over with a little powder, and they will do very well."

Mrs. Benton ſhook her head, but deſiring Jenny to take the comb, and proceed by Miſs Botherim's directions, ſhe went on to the examination of the wardrobe, which Bridgetina diſplayed for her inſpection. Having laid aſide two or three printed calicoes,

calicoes,' and as many ordinary muſlins, ſhe at length arrived at a dreſs carefully pinned up in a large table-cloth. "How very fortunate," ſaid ſhe, "that my mother ſhould by miſtake have ſent me this favourite dreſs, in which ſhe always ſays I look ſo well. It is made up after her own fancy, and admirably ſuited to my complexion. Do you not admire it?"

'Indeed, Ma'am, the ſilk is very pretty, to be ſure, but only—now that ſilks are ſo little worn, I fear it will look a little particular. The colour, too, ſo deep a roſe is rather glaring, and I fear it will be thought unfaſhionable.'

"Oh, as to the fear of being particular, I deſpiſe it. The gown has been very much admired at W——, and the fancy of trimming it with theſe knots of deep blue ribbons has been greatly praiſed."

'I do not doubt it; but you know, Ma'am, that in London—indeed, believe me that you had better go to Mrs. Fielding's in a plain muſlin. I beg pardon for the liberty I take, but indeed I cannot help wiſhing you to conſider, how odd ſuch a dreſs as this will appear in a room full of company.'

The predilection of Bridgetina for her favourite gown was not to be moved by the remonſtrances of Mrs. Benton, though they continued to be urged with encreaſing vehemence till interrupted by Jenny, who declared the curls of the wig to be ſo intractable as to bid defiance to her utmoſt ſkill. Again Mrs. Benton hinted the neceſſity of procuring a hair-dreſſer; but as Bridgetina was obſtinate in oppoſing it, ſhe herſelf undertook to ſettle the inflexible treſſes on one ſide of the wig, while Jenny tugged at the other. At length the labours of the toilette were concluded, and

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our heroine, having refuſed to permit Jenny to call a coach, tripped it on foot through George's-ſtreet, and reached Mrs. Fielding's door at the moment ſome ladies, who had juſt ſtepped from a coroneted carriage, were entering it. She followed them without heſitation up ſtairs. The names of Lady Caroline and Lady Juliet Manners were announced aloud; and immediately after, that of Miſs Bothe:im was pronounced by the ſame ſonorous voice. Mrs. Fielding ſtarted at the ſound; ſhe was ſtill ſpeaking to Lady Juliet at no great diſtance from the door, when it reached her ears. She inſtantly turned round, and in ſpite of her vexation, could ſcarcely forbear ſmiling at the ſtrange appearance of the little *outré* figure that approached her.

"Bleſs me," cried a young lady who ſtood up to ſpeak to Lady Caroline Manners, "What maſquerade figure has your ladyſhip brought in with you? I did not hear of any fancy ball this evening?

'She did not come with us,' ſaid Lady Caroline, 'nor can I imagine who ſhe is; but ſhe is dreſſed in character ſure enough, though I am poſitive there is no maſquerade. I dare ſay ſhe is ſome oddity, for you know Mrs. Fielding does ſometimes pick up queer people.'

Who is ſhe? what can ſhe be? where does ſhe come from? reverberated twenty whiſpering voices at once. Some imagined her to be a foreigner, but of what nation no one could determine. Others ſagaciouſly diſcovered it to be ſome one of their common acquaintance dreſſed up in diſguiſe, and introduced by Mrs. Fielding for the amuſement of the company; but the concluſion made by thoſe beſt acquainted with Mrs. Fielding, and which in a ſhort time became general,

general, was highly in Bridgetina's favour, as it ſuppoſed her ſome perſon of extraordinary talents, whoſe ſoaring genius was above conformity to the common faſhions of the world.

Time does not permit us at preſent to controvert the falſe notion upon which this opinion is founded, otherwiſe we ſhould not deſpair of being able ſatisfactorily to prove, that the affectation of ſingularity, ſo far from being a concomitant of real genius, is a certain proof of a confined and little mind. But without waiting to diſcuſs this ſubject any farther, we return to Bridgetina, who, quite unconſcious of the wonder her appearance excited, dreſſed her countenance in a gracious ſmile as ſhe waddled up to Mrs. Fielding, who waited to be addreſſed by her without ſpeaking.

"It was extremely fortunate that I heard you were to be at home this evening." ſaid Bridgetina, after making her curtſey.

'I ſhould have been extremely happy to have heard the ſame of you from W——,' replied Mrs. Fielding, attempting to look ſerious.

"I do not doubt that," returned Bridgetina; "but I know your motives, and have come with a view to convince you that they are erroneous. I wiſh to have an opportunity of communing with you for half an hour or ſo in private, and ſhall wait your time."

'It cannot poſſibly be this evening,' returned Mrs. Fielding, who hoped, by an abſolute refuſal, to prevail on her to depart; you ſee how I am engaged: I cannot have it in my power to ſpeak to you for five minutes on any account whatever.'

"Ah!" ſaid Mr. Sardon, who at that moment entered the room, "ſee how the *power of ſympathy* attracts me to the ſpot that contains Miſs Botherim.

rim. You cannot think, Ma'am," continued he, addreſſing himſelf to Bridgetina, from whom Mrs. Fielding had turned to receive ſome other company, " You cannot think what a convert you have made of me. I have twice walked from Charing-Croſs to Hyde-Park corner, without caſting one glance on either ſhoe-buckles or tea-urns; and though I muſt confeſs I neither laughed nor cried, I have had ſome flights of fancy that I hope will entitle me to be ranked among your men of genius."

'I make no doubt of your powers, ſir,' returned Bridgetina, gravely. 'You ſeem a man capable of eſtimating, and of energizing in no common degree.'

Mr. Sardon bowed. " The approbation of a lady of your penetration is too flattering. How much does Mrs. Fielding oblige her friends by introducing among them a perſon ſo rarely qualified! But pray, do you not intend to enlighten this brilliant circle by a lecture on metaphyſics? You know no opportunity for inſtructing mankind ought to be loſt; and I dare ſay there are many perſons here preſent to whom your arguments would be ſtrikingly original."

Mrs. Fielding, who overheard the latter part of Mr. Sardon's ſpeech, here interpoſed. 'Miſs Botherim has too much ſenſe to believe you,' ſaid ſhe, gently tapping him with her fan. 'Though unaccuſtomed to town-circles, ſhe knows that to give a lecture upon any ſubject in a mixed company would be very improper; though not ſo bad (whiſpering Mr. Sardon) as to lead a poor wrong-headed girl into the folly of expoſing herſelf to the ridicule of a whole company.'

" No time can be improper for the promulgation of truth," ſaid Bridgetina. " Mr. Sardon ſpeaks

ſpeaks like a philoſopher. He knows it is our duty in every company to argue, to reaſon, to diſcuſs. But to be ſure," continued ſhe, drawing up her head with an air of conſcious triumph, "it is not every perſon that is qualified to enlighten the world by abſtract ſpeculation.

'Miſs Botherim ſpeaks like an oracle!' cried Mr. Sardon. He was going on, but was checked by a frown from Mrs. Fielding, who obſerving the eyes of the whole room fixed on Bridgetina, deſired her to ſit down in a corner leſs expoſed to obſervation. Thither ſhe was followed by Mr. Sardon, who continued to amuſe himſelf with her eccentricity; while the curioſity excited by the ſingularity of her appearance, and the pedantic formality of her manner, attracted round them a circle of ladies who were all eager to liſten to their converſation.

Though cards were not excluded from the parties of Mrs. Fielding, they were generally declined by the majority of the company. Where perſons qualified to reliſh the pleaſures of converſation have an opportunity of enjoying it in perfection, they muſt, indeed, be the fettered ſlaves of cuſtom, if they prefer an amuſement in which fools may conquer, and knaves be crowned with victory, to the refined delight ariſing from the communication of ideas, the colliſion of wit, and the inſtructive obſervations of genius.

From the appearance of Bridgetina ſomething very extraordinary was expected. Mrs. Fielding's taſte for the converſation of people of talents was well known. Her ſolicitude to bring forward extraordinary genius from the depreſſing ſhade of obſcurity had often been crowned with ſucceſs; but though talents had her admiration, it was goodneſs and virtue that could alone en-

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ſure her approbation or eſteem. Her ſituation in life gave her an opportunity of ſelecting her acquaintance, and her diſcernment and diſcrimination afforded her the means of employing this ineſtimable privilege to the beſt advantage. No ſooner, therefore, was a new face ſeen in her drawing-room, than her friends anticipated a new ſource of pleaſure or improvement; nor were they often diſappointed. Sometimes, indeed, it would happen, notwithſtanding the art ſhe diſplayed in mixing her gueſts, that two learned men would get near enough to fall into a tedious argument concerning the etymology of a word, or ſome minute point in hiſtory or antiquity, for which not another ſoul but themſelves could care a ſingle ſtraw; and ſometimes a diſpute in politics would caſt a temporary cloud over the good-humour of the diſputants; but by the management of Mrs. Fielding theſe things rarely occurred. She was at ſuch pains to provide the talkers with liſteners, and the liſteners with talkers, and to ſuit the ſubject of converſation to the general taſte, that all enjoyed in ſome degree the pleaſure of pleaſing, and the happineſs of being pleaſed.

Bridgetina was at firſt afraid to run on in the words of her favourite authors, as ſhe could not doubt that the ſubject of her ſtudies muſt be familiar to the greateſt part of her well-informed audience. Great was her ſurpriſe, when ſhe diſcovered that the books which ſhe believed were deſtined to enlighten the whole world, and new-model the human race, had not been thought worthy of a reading by any one who heard her. She took advantage of the diſcovery to quote page after page, while any one would liſten to her; but though the novelty of her arguments for

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ſome time excited attention, and her flow of language did not fail to obtain applauſe, ſhe ſoon experienced the common fate of an haranguer, in wearying the patience of thoſe ſhe pretended to inſtruct. Fatigued with the monotonous ſounds of her diſcordant voice, they turned from her, and gladly joined the different groupes where ſubjects of general literature, or of elegant criticiſm, gave every one an opportunity of contributing their quota to the fund of converſation.

Bridgetina was now in her turn, obliged to become a liſtener, till her patience being quite exhauſted, ſhe aroſe, and walking acroſs the room to where Mrs. Fielding ſat, enquired aloud whether ſhe might expect to ſee Dr. Sydney there that night? Mrs. Fielding told her ſhe need not expect to ſee him, as he had another engagement.

"You are acquainted with his engagements!" cried Bridgetina. "You are the confidante of his boſom, the object of his paſſion! it is for you he rejects my love! but if you have any moral ſenſibility, if you are at all capable of energiſing, I do not deſpair of convincing you that you owe it to duty, you owe it to every principle of juſtice, you owe it to the happineſs of an individual to relinquiſh your deſigns on the perſon of this amiable young man."

Mrs. Fielding, ſhocked beyond meaſure at a ſpeech which ſo ſtrongly indicated a diſordered ſtate of intellect, thinking it better to ſoothe than to irritate the mind of the ſpeaker, in a voice of pity told her, that if ſhe would, on the morning after the following, give her the pleaſure of her company at breakfaſt, ſhe would endeavour to give her ſatisfaction.

"I ſhall not fail to come," ſaid Bridgetina;

"and as truth is omnipotent, I make no doubt my arguments will prevail." So saying she took her leave, to the great delight of Mr. Fielding, who, tho' she never made a practice of being denied; immediately ordered that Miss Botherim should never again be admitted with other company.

As Bridgetina retired, the servant stationed in the anti-room desired the footman below to call Miss Botherim's carriage. "I have no carriage, sir," said Bridgetina, "I disdain the use of a carriage, which is a contrivance of pampered luxury, and altogether unnecessary to a philosopher?"

The man bowed, and again gravely advancing to the head of the stairs, 'Open the street-door to a philosopher,' cried he, with the voice of a Stentor.

Bridgetina, highly pleased with the compliment, thanked him, and descending, made her way through an avenue of grinning footmen, to whom her appearance afforded no small subject of merriment. The door was opened by the footman who had formerly conducted her to the coach, and who had the civility again to offer to procure her either coach or chair; but she declined his services, declaring there was nothing she so much loved as a solitary ramble by moonlight.

Unfortunately for Bridgetina, her reply to the footman was overheard by a couple of girls, who were on their way to Bond-street in search of adventures, and who eagerly seised the opportunity that presented itself, of venting the malignant spirit of mischief in that sort of outrage which is vulgarly denominated *fun*. They soon came up with

with Bridgetina, and getting her between them, addreſſed her with pretended gravity.

"Do you intend to take a long walk?" cried one.

'Yes, upon the tight-rope, as you may perceive by her dreſs,' cried the other.

"I intend to walk no farther than Conduit-ſtreet." ſaid Bridgetina; "and am ſuch a ſtranger in town, that I know not where ſuch a walk as tight-rope is."

A loud laugh from her companions very much diſcompoſed our heroine, who, greatly offended by their rudeneſs, begged they would leave her to her own reflections."

'Own reflections, pretty dear!' ſaid the talleſt of the girls. 'Do you know, Maria, where *own* reflections is?"

"I'll be hanged if I do," replied the other; "unleſs it be in Rag-fair, where ſhe bought that quiz of a wig."

'My dreſs is no concern of yours,' ſaid Bridgetina, angrily; 'and I muſt need tell you, it is rather uncivil to intrude upon me in this manner, when I wiſh to be alone.'

"Why don't you leave us," ſaid one, giving her a puſh, and winking ſignificantly to the other. "I am ſure I don't wiſh to keep you."

"Nor I, neither,' ſaid the other; 'I would not be ſeen walking with ſuch a trollopy quiz for the world.' So ſaying, ſhe gave the unfortunate Bridgetina ſuch a puſh towards her companion, that both were driven upon the rails. Bridgetina ſcreamed, but before ſhe could recover herſelf, was again puſhed with ſuch violence by the girl againſt whom ſhe had laſt been driven, that after reeling a few paces ſhe fell proſtrate in the kennel. The girls ſet up a ſhout of victory, while Bridge-

tina, forgetful of the immoral tendency of coertion, vociferated Murder! help! murder! as loud as ſhe was able to bawl. In an inſtant the ſtreet, which was before ſtill as midnight, was filled with a croud, which as few were ſeen to iſſue from the houſes, ſeemed as if by inchantment wafted to the ſpot. The dread ſound of the watchman's rattle gave the ſignal for alarm. Three or four guardians of the night were ſoon aſſembled, who, at the inſtance of Bridgetina, would have taken her companions into cuſtody, had they not by a ſingular piece of effrontery contrived to turn the popular voice in their favour.

"What!" cried the one who had ſhoved Bridgetina into the kennel, "you are pretty watchmen, indeed! pretend not to know Poll Maddoc! the moſt notorious wench in London. There's ne'er a boy in St. Giles's that don't know ſquinting Poll. She was condemned at the Old-Bailey for picking the pocket of Jerry Wapping laſt 'ſizes, let her deny it if ſhe dare; or that ſhe nimm'd that wig from Moſes the jew in Rag-fair; or that ſhe is now kept by Peter Puff, the puppet-ſhow-man. She cry out murder, indeed, becauſe we would not ſuffer her to walk the ſtreets with us. Does ſhe think that we would be ſeen in company with ſuch a trull? No, no; it an't come to that yet; we will let her know that we are meat for her maſters."

This oration quickly turned every voice againſt the hapleſs Bridgetina, who in vain proteſted that the orator had miſtaken her perſon.

The ſagacious watchman recogniſed her as an old acquaintance, and declared that he ſhould provide her a night's lodging in the watch-houſe.

Bridgetina expoſtulated; ſhe declared ſhe was going home to her lodgings, when acoſted by the

two

two ladies who had given such an erroneous description of her person.

'Your lodgings!' cried the watchman with a sneer, 'you intended to sleep with master punch, did you? but we shall lodge you as safe as with the devil, and Doctor Faustus to boot; come along, we cannot stay for any more jabber.' So saying, he seised the reluctant arm of Bridgetina, but was stopped for a moment by his coadjutor, who, jogging the other arm of his prisoner, told her in a whisper, that 'if she would tip them half a-crown she might still regain her liberty.'

"Half-a-crown!" repeated Bridgetina, "I have not a single shilling in my pocket; but if you will call upon me to-morrow, I shall pay you the money with pleasure."

'To-morrow!' said the watchman; 'that's all my eye, d'ye see. D'ye think I'm such a simpleton as to trust your word?'

"I know," replied Bridgetina, "that promises are immoral, and ought not to be considered as binding; but in the present case——"

'No more palaver,' said the honest watchman; 'if you don't down with the ready, you must go.'

Bridgetina begged to be heard, but in vain. Each seizing an arm, they dragged her off; and had nearly reached the end of the street, when, to the unspeakable joy of the struggling, weeping Bridgetina, she perceived Henry Sydney advancing towards them.

Great was the surprise of Henry, on beholding the dismal plight of our heroine; of which, in a commanding voice, he instantly demanded the cause. He could not very easily understand either the story of the watchmen, or the incoherent detail of Bridgetina, but found it no dif-

ficult matter to perſuade the guardians of the peace of their miſtake; who, receiving from his pocket ſome very convincing arguments in favour of their priſoner's innocence, did not heſitate to deliver up their charge.

'I hope, (ſaid he) Miſs Botherim,' as he conducted her to Mrs. Benton's door, 'this incident will convince you that London is a very improper place for you to remain in, while deſtitute of the protection of any friend. You ſee how your ignorance of the manners of the metropolis expoſes you to inſult. I am happy in having reſcued you at preſent from a ſituation ſo terrible that I ſhudder to think of it; but another time you may not be ſo fortunate to meet a friend. Let me, therefore, intreat you to think of an immediate return to W——, where your mother is made miſerable by your abſence.'

"Cruel Henry!" returned the weeping Bridgetina; "but I now know the motive of your conduct. Let me but reaſon the matter with you in one ſingle conference, and I ſhall be ſatisfied."

Henry, in hopes of being able to conquer her ſtrange infatuation by argument, conſented to drink tea with her the following evening; and having ſeen her under the protection of Mrs. Benton's roof, took his leave, and purſued his way to his own lodgings.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

" Bring me a father that ſo lov'd his child,
" Whoſe joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
" And bid him ſpeak of patience!
" No, no; 'tis all men's office to ſpeak patience
" To thoſe that wring under the load of ſorrow;
" But no man's virtue nor ſufficiency
" To be ſo moral when he ſhall endure,
" The like himſelf."

SOUTHEY.

BEFORE we accompany Henry on his viſit to Bridgetina, it may not be amiſs to take a retroſpective view of the manner in which he has been engaged from the time we left him reading the propoſals of his enlightened and liberal admirer.

The ungrateful Henry, far from being elevated into rapture by the exalted ſentiments and generous propoſals of the philoſophic maiden, having given her letter a haſty and peeviſh peruſal, threw it on the ground; nor did he at that time vouchſafe to read the paper which had been incloſed in it, and which was no other than the circular letter addreſſed by Mr. Myope to his brethren the philoſophers.

By the unfortunate fate of the amiable Julia, and the deep affliction of her wretched parents, the mind of Henry was ſo completely engroſſed, that he had not a ſingle thought to beſtow on the tender woes of Bridgetina. Even the reflections upon his own ſituation were ſuſpended; and ſelfiſh cares and ſelfiſh ſorrows were abſorbed in the benevolent feelings of compaſſion, or baniſhed by diſintereſted regret. He flew to the lodg

ings of his friend Churchill, whom he found juſt arrived; his body worn out with fatigue, and his mind lacerated by diſappointment. After many vexatious delays and interruptions, he had traced the fugitives to London; but there, having ſtepped from the poſt-chaiſe into the firſt empty hackney-coach that met them, they effectually eluded all further purſuit. Henry ſpent the remainder of the day with his friend, and devoted the greateſt part of the ſucceeding ones to his aſſiſtance. Their endeavours were fruitleſs. The retreat of the lovers could not be diſcovered; and poor Churchill, at length ſubmitting to the judgment of Henry, was perſuaded to give over the hopeleſs reſearch.

The day of the election of the phyſician for the hoſpital at length arrived; when the rival candidate having, in conſequence of a private viſit from Mrs. Fielding's agent, relinquiſhed his pretenſions, Henry was unanimouſly choſen to the vacant office; and thankfully rejoiced in his ſucceſs, as a ſtep towards that ſtate of independency on which his deareſt hopes of happineſs ſeemed entirely to depend. Still were his proſpects diſtant, far diſtant from ſuch an income as would, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, be deemed adequate to the ſupport of a family. Many men of the firſt abilities in his profeſſion had, he well knew, ſpent their lives in hopeleſs penury; and that he ſhould be one of the fortunate few whom the caprice of faſhion ſhould introduce to fortune's favours, was a per-adventure too precarious for hope to build on.

The peculiar advantage he enjoyed of being introduced by Mrs. Fielding into the houſes of ſeveral families of diſtinction, does not appear to have been eſtimated by Henry at its full value.

He

He was so ignorant as to imagine, that when people were sick, they would look more to the experience and abilities of the physician in whose hands they entrusted their lives, than to his rank in the scale of fashion. He did not think it possible that the vanity of a dying man could be flattered by having his prescription written by the same hand that had lately felt the pulse of a lord; or that his weeping wife and daughters could feel a superior gratification in telling their friends that the dear deceased had been visited by Doctor ——, at the very time he was attending my Lady Duchess, than they should have experienced from the happy effects of any medical skill. Of the omnipotence of fashon Henry had as yet formed no adequate idea; and trusting to his own efforts, he resolved by exertion and unceasing assiduity to deserve the success he so ardently wished for.

Several days elapsed without bringing him another letter from W——; neither had Mr. Churchill received any intelligence from that quarter; so that the anxiety of both was wound up to the extreme; when Henry, on returning from his attendance on a new patient, a few houre previous to his chivalrous rescue of Bridgetina from the hands of the giant enchanters, found a letter from his sister, which had been brought by that morning's post. He eagerly broke the seal, and read as follows:

"BEFORE I enter upon subjects of a less pleasing though deeply-interesting nature, let me tell my dear Harry how my heart thanks him for the kind haste he made to rid me of my foolish fears. No; I did not, I could not, suspect you of loving such a woman as Miss Botherim; but I could not help entertaining some sort of

apprehenſion that you might have left her room to conſtrue ſome unmeaning ſpeech into an avowal of tenderneſs. Even here I have been miſtaken; and my heart exultingly repeats, that my beloved brother is now as ever free from the ſhadow of reproach. But the more unequivocal your conduct, the more ſhameful, the more abſurd and prepoſterous appears that of this weak, bewildered girl, whoſe brains ſeems to have been turned by the wild ambition of ſtanding forth a practical champion for doctrines which even in theory are ſufficiently ridiculous.

"Would to God that ſhe had been the only ſacrifice to theſe extravagant opinions! But, alas! poor Julia! She too, it ſeems, was a convert to this new ſyſtem, which teaches, that by cancelling the bonds of domeſtic affection, and diſſolving the ties of gratitude, the virtue and happineſs of the world is to be increaſed. Fatal deluſion! how would it vaniſh from her mind, could ſhe have but a momentary glance at the altered countenance of her dying father! For theſe laſt three days he has continued to ſuffer all that the moſt extreme agony of mind, added to the moſt acute bodily torture, can inflict. Dr. Orwell and my father have united their efforts to ſoothe his ſorrows, and to alleviate the pangs of grief; but, alas! they cannot remove the dart which rankles in his boſom, or lead him to forget that it was planted there by the hand of his much-beloved child.

"The aſſurance obtained from Mrs. Glib, that Vallaton was not a married man, as had been reported, ſeemed to convey a ſhort-lived relief; but it was followed by ſuch an account of his character, and of the meanneſs of his ſtation, (which, it ſeems, is that of a hair-dreſſer) as opened every

every wound of the father's heart. Unable to ſupport the war of conflicting paſſions, his feeble frame ſeems nearly exhauſted by the conteſt. In proportion as he becomes weaker, the more powerful emotions ſubſide. Indignation gives place to pity, and the feelings of reſentment are ſwallowed up in thoſe of paternal tenderneſs. He even ſtrives to form excuſes for his daughter's conduct, and ſeems eager to transfer the blame from her to ſome other object.

"Yeſterday as my father ſat by his bed-ſide, after a ſilence of ſome minutes. "Mr. Sydney," ſaid he, "you are very good to bear with me; but you are yourſelf a father, though you cannot —oh, no; you cannot poſſibly know the ſorrow that has pierced me. For the pride I took in this darling child, how ſeverely am I now puniſhed! In the fooliſhneſs of my heart, I believed her to be ſuperior to all her ſex. I encouraged her to throw off the prejudices of religion—to act from nobler motives than the hopes of an hereafter—to ſubſtitute the laws of honour for the laws of GOD; and to conſult the dictates of her mind inſtead of the morality of the goſpel. Oh if I have taught my child to err; if it is for want of more ſolid principles that ſhe has been made an eaſy prey to the ſnares of a ſeducer—but I cannot bear the thought. Tell me, Mr. Sydney, O tell me that it is not *to me* ſhe owes her fall! Say not that it was I who led my child to the precipice down which ſhe has ſunk!"

"You, Harry, who are ſo well acquainted with the benignity of our dear father's nature, may imagine how much he was affected: nor need I ſay that he uſed every endeavour to ſoothe and comfort the poor unhappy man who ſeemed thus to cling to him for ſupport. You know how much

much it is his delight to heal the wounded ſpirit, and to ſpeak peace to the broken in heart. I pray GOD that his endeavours may in this inſtance prove ſucceſsful!

"Our amiable friend, Harriet Orwell, has done all in her power to ſupply the place of a daughter to poor Mrs. Delmond. While her attentions have been engroſſed by her, I have devoted mine to Mrs. Botherim; who, ever ſince ſhe heard of Biddy's departure, has been in a ſtate little ſhort of deſtraction. Nothing, to be ſure, can be more ludicrous than the ſtile of her lamentations ſometimes are; but the voice of ſorrow ought to command reſpect, however mean or abſurd the language in which it is conveyed. I am far, you may believe, from juſtifying a breach of filial duty; but ſurely the man does great injuſtice to his children, who gives them a mother ſo weak, or ſo ignorant, as to render her deſpicable in their eyes; not that to a well-regulated mind the weakneſs of a parent will ever be made the object of contempt; but how ſhould the children of a fool come by the information neceſſary to point out the line of duty, or to fix the principles of filial piety in the heart?

"Oh, my brother, if ever you marry, may your wife be one whoſe memory your children's children ſhall delight to honour; may ſhe demand from her family, not merely the barren obedience of duty, but the grateful tribute of heart-felt veneration and eſteem!

"At the concluſion of the laſt paragraph, I laid aſide my writing, to enquire for Capt. Delmond; the anſwers ſent by a ſervant are ſo little ſatisfactory, that I have generally contrived to go twice a-day myſelf, and from Harriet have learned the particulars for which I was ſo anxious.

"Very

"Very little alteration has taken place in his ſtate of mind or health ſince yeſterday, except that he is apparently weaker and more tranquil. Dr. Orwell accompanied me up ſtreet. As we approached the houſe of Mr. Glib the ſtationer, we perceived a croud about the door; and on enquiring into the cauſe, were informed that Mr. Glib had ſuddenly departed from W——, and that the creditors were then taking poſſeſſion of the few effects he had left behind him. A perſon from the houſe requeſted of Dr. Orwell to ſtep in for a few moments, as the preſence of a juſtice of peace was neceſſary, in order to take the affidavit of Mrs. Glib about ſome matters, but I do not know what. While waiting for the Doctor, I was accoſted in the rudeſt manner by two or three of the children, who were running about like ſo many ragged colts. To ſay they are in a ſtate of nature would be doing little honour to our ſpecies, for never did I ſee imps ſo miſchievous and impudent. They were happily attracted by the arrival of another ſtranger, an officer of dragoons, who was lately quartered in a neighbouring town, and whoſe attentions to Mrs. Glib have not eſcaped the notice of the ſcandal loving coterie. This gentleman ſtepped up to Mrs. Glib's apartment without ceremony, and from the air of ſatisfaction that appeared in his manner, went, I hope, with the intention of affording relief to her misfortunes. In a few minutes Dr. Orwell returned to me, and brought with him a letter which Mrs. Glib had put into his hands. It was written by her huſband, and left behind him as a juſtification of his conduct. By this it appears, that in deſerting his wife and children his acts *upon principle*. "Convinced," he ſays, "of the immoral tendency of matrimony,

and

and that is an odious and unjuſt inſtitution—*a monopoly, and the worſt of monopolies—which, by forbidding two human beings to follow the dictates of their own minds, makes prejudice alive and vigorous;** he is reſolved to diſmiſs the miſtake he has ſo happily detected, and no longer ſeek, by artificial and deſpotic means, to engroſs a pretty woman to himſelf, but to reſtore to her that liberty, of which (by the deſpotic ſanction of a fooliſh law) ſhe had been unjuſtly deprived. As to the five children which ſhe calls *his*, it is a matter of no importance to him whether they are ſo or no. He has neither the *ariſtocracy*, *ſelf-love*, or *family pride*,† that teaches prejudiced people to ſet a value upon a matter in itſelf ſo inſignificant; and as they may very probably, be no worthier than the children of any other man, it is not conſiſtent with moral juſtice that he ſhould devote to them the fruits of his labour.

"So far he ſeems to make uſe of the words of ſome author, who probably little imagined that his theory would ever meet with ſuch a practical advocate. In the concluſion, he makes uſe of his own peculiar jargon, which is often whimſical enough. Talks of Hottentots, who live according to the ſublime ſyſtem that is to be univerſally adopted in the *Age of Reaſon*, and hints at a deſign of emigrating to Africa!

"It is probable Miſs Botherim may have been induced to become a party in this projected expedition. For the ſake of her poor mother, I hope ſhe will not carry her folly quite ſo far; and intreat you may do all you can to perſuade her to an immediate return to W——.

"Adieu,

* See Pol. Juſ. vol. ii. p. 499. † See Pol. Juſ.

"Adieu, my deareſt brother. We have another frank for this day week, which my father deſires me to tell you he will fill; in the mean time he ſends his bleſſing. In my opinion, the greateſt we can have from Heaven, is a juſt ſenſe of the happineſs we enjoy in having ſuch a parent. That he may be bleſſed in the proſperity and happineſs of 'his heart's dear Harry,' is the never-ceaſing prayer of

"Your truly affectionate ſiſter,

"MARIA SYDNEY."

A ſecond letter from Maria was encloſed in the ſame cover. The contents were as follows:

"I HAVE opened the pacquet, to inform my dear Henry that the ſorrows of Captain Delmond are at an end. They have at length broken the attenuated thread of his exiſtence, and accelerated his departure to the ſilent grave. Oh, Julia, Julia, what muſt be thy feelings, when informed of this event! The infatuation of paſſion may for a while ſtifle the voice of nature, but a time will come when the ſword with which ſhe has pierced her father's heart, ſhall deeply wound her own.

"The whole of yeſterday the poor Captain was ſo much eaſier as to give ſome hopes of his recovery. He ſat up great part of the day, and appeared to receive ſo much pleaſure from the company of my father, that he ſpent the greateſt part of it in his apartment. He more than once regretted that he had ſo long lived near two ſuch men as my father and Doctor Orwell, without having attempted to cultivate their friendſhip. 'I now,' ſaid he, 'perceive my error, in attributing to the ſpirit of the chriſtian religion itſelf that gloomy illiberality which I have obſerved in ſome

ſome of its pretended votaries. I ſee that its prieſts are not neceſſarily either mercenary knaves or zealous bigots; and begin to apprehend, that while I piqued myſelf on being ſuperior to prejudice, I have in reality been its dupe.'

"The endeavours uſed by my father to ſoothe and tranquillize his mind appeared to be effectual; and he left him in ſuch a compoſed and happy ſtate, as ſeemed to promiſe a night of undiſturbed repoſe. No ſooner, however, was he left to his own meditations, than his thoughts appear to have recurred to the ſubject of his uneaſineſs. He became reſtleſs, impatient, and not unfrequently delirious. Sometimes he uttered the wildeſt threats againſt the villain who had deprived him of his daughter; and ſomtimes he called upon her name, and in the tendereſt and moſt ſupplicating voice, adjured her not to leave him. Towards morning he called upon the nurſe to aſſiſt him in changing the poſture of his head; and while ſhe did ſo, 'Oh, Julia! Julia!' he murmured in a feeble voice, 'I looked to thy dear hand to ſmooth my death-bed pillow—but I forgive thee!' His voice failed, he ſunk down upon the bed, and in a few moments expired.

"Mrs. Delmond, being worn out with fatigue and grief, had, by the perſuaſion of Harriet, (who has indeed acted like an angel) lain down to take ſome reſt. She had fallen into a profound ſlumber, from which ſhe would have been haſtily awakened by the nurſe; but Harriet, ſatisfying herſelf that all was over, would not permit the ſlumbers of the poor widow to be diſturbed. By her wiſe precaution, Mrs. Delmond regained ſome ſtrength of mind as well as of body; and, ſupported by her ſoothing tenderneſs, has been enabled

enabled to bear her afflictions with more fortitude than could have been expected.

"A meſſage from General Villers has juſt arrived, requeſting Mrs. Delmond's permiſſion to take upon himſelf the charge of the funeral; which he wiſhes to be performed in a manner ſuitable to the birth and merit of his deceaſed friend.

"Your letter is this moment put into my hand. Ah! in what juſt colours does it paint the amiable Churchill! what noble generoſity of ſentiment! What affecting ſenſibility! That Julia ſhould have known him, ſhould have ſeen (and how could ſhe be blind to a partiality ſo viſible) the impreſſion ſhe had made upon his heart, and yet give her preference to a wretch like Vallaton, is a myſtery to me inexplicable. Adieu! deareſt Henry, my ſpirits are ſo depreſſed I can ſay no more, but that I am ever affectionately your's,

"M. S."

Henry had no ſooner peruſed his ſiſter's letter, than he haſtened to his friend Churchill to inform him of the contents. As the quickeſt method of doing ſo, he gave it him to read, a breach of delicacy which we can by no means excuſe. If Henry had given a moment's conſideration to what the feelings of Maria would have been, could ſhe have ſeen the eye of Churchill gazing on her letter, and devouring, with an appearance of more than common intereſt, thoſe paſſages concerning himſelf, which ſhe would leaſt of all have expoſed to his peruſal, Henry would not have given the letter out of his own hand.

Churchill returned it to him with a ſigh. "What a charming girl is your ſiſter," ſaid he. "How clear her underſtanding! How juſt her ſentiments!

ſentiments! Happy had it been for poor Julia Delmond had her mind been formed like hers. But the death of the poor father—how very ſhocking it is! He deſerved a better fate. I fooliſhly flattered myſelf that I ſhould have had it in my power to contribute to his happineſs, and promiſed myſelf much pleaſure in performing to him the duty of a ſon. That is over. And I can now only ſhew the reſpect I bear his memory, by aſſiſting at the laſt offices of humanity, and following his body to the grave."

Henry, finding it in vain to oppoſe this ſudden deſign of his friend, left him to follow his inclination. To ſay truth, had he been at liberty to conſult his own, he would much rather have encountered the fatigue of a midnight journey, to accompany him to W——, than have gone to the ſplendid party to which he was engaged.

It was on his return from this party, that he diſcovered our heroine in the deplorable ſituation from which he had the good fortune to reſcue her. He now reproached himſelf for the little pains he had taken to perſuade her of the folly and impropriety of her remaining in London, and reſolved to loſe no time in urging the neceſſity of her immediate return to W——. He next morning communicated his intention to Mrs. Fielding, when, by her own appointment, he waited on her to report the ſituation of ſome poor patients ſhe had recommended to his attention. On receiving from her an account of all that had paſſed the preceding evening, his hopes of ſucceſs became rather leſs ſanguine; but the neceſſity there appeared to him of making ſome effort to reſcue the poor girl from a ſituation expoſed to ſo many evils, made him reſolve on making

making the experiment. While canvaſſing the ſubject with Mrs. Fielding, her carriage drove up to the door, in which, accompanied by Henry, ſhe ſet off on a tour of viſits; and ſtrange to tell, ſet off with a certain aſſurance of receiving, wherever ſhe appeared, a hearty welcome!

CHAP. XI.

"Come hither, out-caſt one! and call her friend,
"And ſhe ſhall be thy friend more readily,
"Becauſe thou art unhappy.
"Art thou aſtoniſh'd, maid,
"That one, though powerful, is benevolent?
"In truth, thou well may'ſt wonder!"

SOUTHEY.

"A WELCOME!" repeats ſome lovely fair one, as with a yawn ſhe throws down the book at the concluſion of the laſt chapter. "La! how vulgar! What a bore to find one's friends at home! I am fatigued to death at the very thoughts of it. What odd notions theſe low authors have of the manners of the faſhionable world!"

Stay, dear lady, and be convinced that we are not ſo ignorant, or ſo little accuſtomed to the world of faſhion, as you ſeem to imagine. Well do we know, that in dropping your tickets at the ſplendid dwellings of the *dear friends*, whoſe names ye in return expect to ſwell your porter's liſt, ye have neither end nor object in view, but the gratification of your own vanity; a vanity which might be ſomewhat humbled, were ye obliged

obliged to witneſs the mortification that would be inflicted on your *dear friends* by your tireſome and inſipid company. Wiſely, therefore, do ye keep your inſignificance concealed; and truſt the gratification of your pride and vanity not to your own intrinſic merits, but to thoſe of the honeſt artiſans, whoſe united labours have clothed your equipage with ſplendor. But never, when rolling in that ſplendid equipage, did the loud thundering of your well-dreſt footman at the door of a ducheſs, not even when it has diſturbed half a ſtreet, touch your conſcious heart with half the extacy that Mrs. Fielding experienced, when after walking down a dirty lane, too narrow for her coach to enter, her gentle tap at the door of a decayed houſe was opened by a face beaming with gratitude, and her preſence hailed as that of a ſuperior being, the diſpenſer of happineſs and joy!

It happened that this obſcure retreat of wretchedneſs was not above a hundred yards remote from the reſidence of a man of faſhion, at whoſe houſe Mrs. Fielding was engaged to dine the day of her firſt viſit to its ſtarving inhabitants. Her heart was ſtill full of the ſcene ſhe had witneſſed. The ghaſtly figure of the wretched father of the family, ſtretched upon a pallet in one corner of the room in the agony of a rheumatic fever, was ſtill before her eyes; the appearance of his wife, not four and twenty hours delivered, ſitting up in bed, and with her feeble hands ſtretching out ſome pieces of muſlin which a lady had in charity ſent her to clear-ſtarch, and in which ſhe was aſſiſted by the eldeſt little girl, a half-naked and more than half-ſtarved creature of nine years old, who worked with eagerneſs in hopes of ſharing in the bread to be thus procured,

sured, and for which four other little mouths now vainly clamoured, still dwelt on Mrs. Fielding's imagination; when she took her place at the loaded board of the voluptuous baronet, who was equally remarkable for the irascibility of his temper, and the epicureanism of his table.

In vain had the ingenuity of the purveyor, and the art of the cook, been employed to please the sickly appetite of this son of luxury. Every dish afforded him a subject of inquietude and vexation. It was upon a fine turbot that he particularly vented the ebullition of his wrath. The sauce had not been made to please him, and sauce and turbot were ordered from the table, with directions that they might be thrown to the dunghill, as they were not fit even for the dogs.

An involuntary exclamation, which at that moment escaped the lips of Mrs. Fielding, reached the angry gentleman's ears. He immediately asked her pardon for his violence, but urged the impossibility of keeping his temper on an occasion so provoking.

"You need make no apology to me, sir," said Mrs. Fielding; for *me* your behaviour has not insulted."

'I hope I have insulted no one;' returned the Baronet, attempting to resume his cheerfulness, while his fiery eye and contracted forehead indicated the rage that still possessed his breast.

"Pardon me, sir," said Mrs. Fielding, "if I differ from you."

'I really do not understand you, Madam,' rejoined the Baronet; 'to whom has my sending away that execrable dish given offence?'

'To the image of GOD in your fellow-creature, now starving at your very door!" returned Mrs. Fielding. "To the famished wretches, who

who, while you are gorged to loathing, have not even bread for their mouths. Within a hundred yards from where you now ſit, have I this morning ſeen a family of eight ſouls, to whom the price of that very diſh you have ſpurned from your table would have afforded luxuries for a week. It is the pardon of *ſuch as theſe* you ſhould ſolicit, for to miſery ſuch as theirs your conduct is an inſult."

Mrs. Fielding felt her energy in the cauſe of humanity not a little ſtrengthened by the ſtriking contraſt this day afforded her, betwixt the ſickly caprice of voluptuouſneſs and the eagerneſs of hungry poverty.

It was to give his medical advice to the father of this little family of wretchedneſs, that ſhe carried Henry to their habitation, which now wore a very different aſpect from that which on her firſt viſit it had preſented. The children were now clothed; the furniture, which had been by piece-meal ſent to pawn, was now replaced; the wife with maternal tenderneſs preſſed the infant to her boſom, whoſe birth ſhe had deplored as an aggravation to her misfortunes; and even the poor huſband, relieved from the torture of beholding his family periſhing before his eyes for the want of that food which ſickneſs rendered him unable to procure, felt half the acuteneſs of his malady removed, and with tears of gratitude implored the beſt bleſſing of Heaven upon his worthy benefactreſs.

After a few viſits of a ſimilar nature, Mrs. Fielding carried our young phyſician to a large houſe deſtined for the reception and temporary abode of ſuch of her own ſex as, from being deſtitute of friends in London, were (when by ſickneſs or misfortune thrown out of employment)

in

in danger of being driven, through fear of want, into habits of infamy. The incident that gave riſe to this plan of charity in Mrs. Fielding's mind, is ſufficiently intereſting to claim the attention of thoſe of our readers who really believe people of an inferior ſtation to be compoſed of the ſame materials with themſelves.

It happened one cold evening in December, that on returning from the theatre, through a narrow ſtreet, an accident which befel a preceding carriage occaſioned a ſtop of many minutes to the line of carriages which followed. Mrs. Fielding let down the glaſs to enquire the cauſe; and having learnt it, was about to pull it up and patiently wait the event, when her attention was attracted by an object of wretchedneſs, who with looks of deep humility implored alms at the door of the coach which was immediately before her's in the line. She heard the glaſs violently drawn up, and ſaw at the ſame moment the trembling emaciated wretch who had preſumed to ſupplicate, receive a blow for her impertinence from the rattan of the laced footman who ſtood behind. Mrs. Fielding, who could not help feeling indignant at an inſult offered to miſery, even when coupled with vice, was about to offer the poor wretch a compenſation for what ſhe had endured, when ſhe ſaw her familiarly accoſted by a bold looking fellow of the order vulgarly called *ſhabby-genteel*. The lamp now ſhone full upon the object of her attention, and diſplayed a countenance that had once been handſome, but apparently waſted by ſickneſs and famine. She ſeemed to ſhrink from the perſon who addreſſed her, but yet wanted reſolution to reſiſt his importunity. She ſuffered him to take one of her hands, while with the back of the other ſhe wiped the tears which

which trickled down her pallid cheek. The coach moved a ſtep or two nearer. Mrs. Fielding diſtinctly heard the ejaculation, 'Oh, GOD, forgive me! if to ſave myſelf from ſtarving——' She could hear no more. The obſtruction to the proceeding of the further carriage being now removed, it drove on with fury, and Mrs Fielding's, with the reſt that followed it, ſuddenly darted forward in full ſpeed.

Mrs. Fielding's ſenſibility was not of that nature which can content itſelf with dropping a graceful tear to the miſery which an active exertion of benevolence has power to relieve. She haſtily pulled the check-ſtring, and having called the footman, "Run, Thomas, run with ſpeed, I beſeech you, after that poor woman, whom yonder wretch is dragging away. Deſire her to come hither; fly——"

Thomas heſitated. 'I preſume, Madam, you do not know that ſhe is——'

"No matter what ſhe is—I muſt ſpeak to her."

Thomas obeyed; and no ſooner did the poor forlorn creature hear the welcome meſſage, than ſtruggling from the man who had hold of her, ſhe haſtened as faſt as her trembling limbs could carry her, to the coach-door over which Mrs. Fielding leaned.

"You appear to be in great miſery, young woman;" ſaid Mrs. Fielding, in a voice of pity.

'I am, indeed, Madam! in miſery that is inexpreſſible.'

"But is taking to a courſe of vice the proper way to procure relief? Would it not be better by honeſt induſtry to ſeek a livelihood, than by continuing in the path of infamy, to——"

'Ah, Madam! I am not the wretch you take me

me for. I am, indeed, I as yet am virtuous; but I am ſtarving. I have not one farthing to get either food or lodging. I wiſh I had courage to die! I know it would be better; and that I out to die, rather than be wicked—but I am *ſo hungry!*——'

Her weak and hollow voice here became quite inarticulate; it died away in ſhort convulſive ſobs, a ſhivering came over her, and ſhe would have ſunk to the ground, had ſhe not been ſupported by Thomas; who, having caught the contagion of pity from his miſtreſs, was now as zealous to relieve the poor unfortunate, as he was before unwilling to go after her. What was to be done? To leave her in her preſent ſituation, was to leave her to periſh. A heavy ſhower came on, which inſtantly determined Mrs Fielding. She ordered Thomas to open the coach-door, and to lift the poor exhauſted wanderer into the carriage, where ſhe ſupported her with her own arms all the way to Hanover-ſquare. A few mouthfuls of biſcuit ſoaked in wine reſtored the ſinking powers of nature; and Mrs. Fielding, who adminiſtered the cordial with her own hands, had the pleaſure of beholding the colour return to the faded cheek, and an expreſſion of ſenſibility reanimate the ſunken eye.

'Are you an angel?' cried the poor miſerable, graſping Mrs. Fielding's hand, as ſhe held out to her a bit of biſcuit. 'Yes, yes, you muſt be an angel! no great lady could be ſo condeſcending, ſo very, very good.'

"Alas!" ſaid Mrs. Fielding, "that the common duties of humanity, in a world where misfortune in one ſhape or other is the lot of all, ſhould be ſo rare as to be thus over rated!"

The ſalutary refreſhment ſhe had received,

aided by a night's repoſe, had ſo far reſtored the poor woman, that when ſhe appeared before Mrs. Fielding on the following morning, ſhe could hardly believe it was the ſame perſon.

In anſwer to Mrs. Fielding's interrogatories, ſhe informed her, that ſhe was the daughter of a Northumbrian peaſant: that an elder brother, who had come up to London ſome few years before, had got ſo good a place as ſhopman at a druggiſt's, that on her father's death ſhe was tempted to come up to town likewiſe—hoping, through her brother's intereſt, to procure a place as maid of all work in ſome creditable family. On arriving in London, ſhe found that her brother had died of the ſmall-pox the week before, and his maſter (who was a batchelor) had been appointed ſurgeon in the army, and was then on the eve of embarking for the Weſt-Indies. He however had the goodneſs, before his departure, to recommend her to a lady and gentleman from Devonſhire, who had taken lodgings in Suffolk-ſtreet, where they had the uſe of a back-kitchen. From breathing the pure air of the Northumberland mountains, ſhe was transferred to this unwholeſome dungeon, where ſhe had not been confined for many weeks when ſhe was ſeiſed with a fit of illneſs, forced to leave her place, and with the ſmall pittance of wages ſhe had acquired in her ſhort ſervice, to pay for a lodging, food, and phyſic. On recovering from her fever, which laſted many weeks, ſhe found herſelf deep in her landlady's debt, who had the *goodneſs* to accept of all the remains of her little wardrobe in lieu of caſh; and having ſtripped her of every thing but the rags in which ſhe uſed to do her dirty work, *humanely* turned her out to the ſtreet. A ſtranger in London, and without friends, to whom

whom could she apply for relief? Who would listen to the tale of her misfortunes? Who would accept her services, or open their doors to receive a wretch that had none to help her?

At the time she was seen by Mrs. Fielding, she had been eight and forty hours without food. Her virtuous principles revolted at the proffered wages of prostitution, till hopeless of succour, and overpowered by the repulse she had met with from the sentimental Lady Mary Mildmay and her powdered footman, she gave way to the impulse of despair, and would probably, if the interposing hand of Mrs. Fielding had not been held out to save her, soon have added one other wretched female to the thousands who yearly perish by disease and want, in the streets of the most wealthy, most charitable, and the most munificent city in the world.

"Surely," said Mrs. Fielding, "there is something wrong in this. There ought to be a reputable receptacle established for affording temporary shelter to those who are willing to eat the bread of honest industry. The government ought —but, alas! I cannot dictate to the government. I have not the power to influence the makers of our laws. But cannot I do something towards the relief of a few of these unhappy individuals? Let me see—"

She then began to make calculations. Gradually, and with deep reflection formed her plan; appropriated a sum to carry it into execution; and at the time she carried Henry to her asylum, she could exult in the reflection, that without injury to her fortune, without assistance from the public, or aid from the purse of any individual, she had, in the five years that had elapsed since the commencement of her scheme, afforded relief to above a thousand destitute females, of

whom many were ſnatched from the jaws of ruin, and ſaved from courſes that would have led to infamy or death.

At firſt the number admitted was very limited. She had now fourteen beds conſtantly occupied by as many women, whoſe willing induſtry was employed to ſuch advantage in needle-work of various deſcriptions, that they entirely cleared the price of their maintenance. Theſe were chiefly compoſed of ſervants, who by ſickneſs, accident, or misfortune, had been thrown out of employment, and who were willing by their diligence to procure the recommendation of the houſe to creditable places. The unhappy female abandoned by the ſeducer, for whom ſhe had quitted the protection of her friends, here found that ſhelter ſhe dared not to implore from her offended family; and if inclined to acquire habits of induſtry, was ſoon put in a way of earning a comfortable ſubſiſtence, and of regaining the invigorating ſtimulus of ſelf-approbation. Even the wretched outcaſt of ſociety, ſuch as are every ſeſſions diſgorged from our priſons, and after having been acquitted by a jury of all crime, are charitably ſent forth either to *ſteal* or *periſh*, was admitted here; not indeed to the ſuperior apartment, but to one provided with every neceſſary for their accommodation, where works of an inferior nature were carried on, the profits accruing from which were all appropriated to cloathing the poor wretches who here found ſhelter.

Three hundred a year was the ſum firſt deſigned by Mrs. Fielding to be expended in this charity. It gradually increaſed to five, and would have been much greater, had ſhe not found means to engage an American merchant in her intereſt, who opened a ſtore in Charleſtown for the ſale of

of ready-made linen garments; and would have taken off her hands, at a good price, more than ſhe was able to ſupply.

"Five hundred a year!" cries Lady Racket; "bleſs me, what a ſweet maſked ball one might give every winter with ſuch a ſum! It is true, Mrs. ****'s, and Lady ******'s, coſt twice the money; but with five hundred pounds well managed, one might give a very pretty, daſhy, ſtileith ſort of an entertainment for a ſingle evening. Do'nt you think ſo?"

CHAP. XII.

"This *forager* on others' wiſdom, leaves
"Her native farm, her reaſon quite untill'd.
"With mixt manure ſhe ſurfeits the rank ſoil,
"Dung'd, but not dreſs'd; and rich to beggary,
"A pomp untameable of weed prevails."

YOUNG.

MRS. Fielding and Henry were ſo deeply engaged in converſation as the carriage went down Holborn, they perceived not Bridgetina paddling along the dirty ſtreet. They did not, however, paſs unobſerved by her. "Yes!" cried ſhe aloud, "there they are, ſide by ſide, taſting the balmy ſweetneſs, drinking the delicious poiſon, which unſophiſticated effective love ſheds through the human heart! Perhaps they are now going to be married. O odious inſtitution! nurſe of depravity! foe to energy and uſefulneſs! Never ſhall I prevail upon the prejudices of Henry to

break thy galling chain. But why ſhould I deſpair? Is not truth omnipotent? Muſt not my reiterated efforts in the end prevail? What though he ſhould be married? May I not convince him of the immoral tendency of all engagements? May I not demonſtrate from the divine principles of philoſophy, that promiſes are not, ought not, to be binding?

Though the buſy croud of paſſengers were too much occupied by their own concerns to take notice of her ſoliloquy, it met with numerous interruptions from the joſtlings of hawkers, porters, draymen, &c. &c. who, careleſs of all before them, puſhed their way in a manner ſo rude, as would frequently have provoked an expoſtulation from our heroine, had they not quickly got out of the reach of her voice. At the bottom of Holborn-hill the throng was ſo great, that ſhe was unable to reſiſt its impetuoſity; but hurried along by the torrent, was forced to make a retrograde movement of ſeveral ſteps. On another occaſion ſhe was carried forward with a rapidity as much beyond her ſtrength as contrary to her inclination: gaſping for breath, ſhe attained the ſteps of a ſhop-door, where ſhe ſtood for a few moments to recover herſelf. "Ah!" ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "how great muſt be his genius, who, in walking through a ſtreet like this, *can enter into nice calculations, can digeſt ſagacious reaſonings, can declaim or deſcribe, impreſſed with the deepeſt ſympathy, or elevated to the loftieſt rapture!** Oh, that I could energize in ſuch a manner!"

"You ſeem at a loſs, Ma'am;' ſaid a tolerably well-dreſſed man, who at that moment paſſed. 'Can I be of any ſervice to you, in ſhewing you your way?'

"I ſhould

* Enquirer.

"I ſhould be ſorry to taſk your urbanity, ſir," returned Bridgetina; "but if you are going to Mincing-lane, I ſhall willingly accept of your aſſiſtance."

The ſtranger declaring he ſhould have pleaſure in eſcorting her, Bridgetina laid hold of his offered arm, and aſcended Snow-hill, not a little ſatisfied with her polite conductor. They had proceeded to the middle of Newgate ſtreet, Bridgetina all the while loading with praiſes the benevolence of the ſtranger; when, to her utter aſtoniſhment, giving her a puſh into the middle of the ſtreet, he darted off, and was out of ſight in a moment.

'Look to your pockets;' cried a butcher's boy. She did ſo, and to her no ſmall diſmay perceived that they had been both turned inſide-out. Happily, a pocket-handkerchief and an empty purſe was all ſhe had to loſe; but her ſpirits were ſo much fluttered by the accident, that ſhe was glad to get into a coach, in which ſhe hoped to return loaded with too conſiderable a ſum to truſt to the mercy of another benevolent ſtranger.

Sir Anthony Aldgate was at home; and our heroine, by her own deſire, was conducted into his office, (a little, diſmal, dirty-looking hole, where every thing wore the appearance of wretchedneſs and penury.) Here were ſeveral young men of no deſpicable parentage, no vulgar education, and no mean abilities, deſtined to paſs the flower of their days in ſumming up pounds ſhillings, and pence. But though every new combination increaſed the owner's wealth, it increaſed not the comforts of one of his dependants. Sir Anthony himſelf had no idea of any comfort but that of accumulation; and this place, which had been the ſcene of his ſucceſsful negociations, was

in his eyes beauteous as the gates of Paradiſe, and cheerful as the garden of Eden.

Bridgetina, who had never ſeen the knight but in his dreſs-ſuit and tie-wig, was ſurpriſed at the appearance he now made, in a ſcarlet flannel night-cap, and night-gown of green ſtuff, lined throughout with crimſon flannel. A ſmall black ſilk handkerchief was tied tightly round his neck, but quite hid from obſervation by the enormous maſs of joller which overhung it. He was ſeated at the deſk when our heroine entered, from which having raiſed his ſmall black eyes, "My couſin Biddy Botherim!" cried he, "is it poſſible? I am glad to ſee you, my dear. But where is your mother? Up ſtairs, with my wife and daughter, I ſuppoſe. Well, better go up to them, and I ſhall be with you preſently. Good-bye."

'My buſineſs at preſent is only with you,' rejoined Bridgetina; 'and I muſt requeſt an immediate audience.'

"Buſineſs with me, my dear; and pray what about? I really did not think you knew any thing about buſineſs."

'My buſineſs is of ſome importance,' rejoined Bridgetina; 'I am to inform you that I have immediate uſe for a thouſand pounds, and to requeſt that you would let me have that ſum as ſoon as poſſible.'

"What! are you then really going to be married!" cried Sir Anthony. "I declare I ſhould not have thought of that; but I hope your mother has taken care of the main chance: a good warm man—hey?——"

'I neither wiſh my mother, or any one elſe, to concern themſelves in my affairs,' ſaid Bridgetina; 'and deſire you would put yourſelf to no farther

farther trouble, than to make over to me the sum I mention.'

"Fair and softly, cousin," rejoined Sir Anthony; "don't you know that my consent in this business is absolutely necessary? And do you think that I will give my consent to any person that does not choose to settle your fortune upon you and your lawful issue?"

'I shall have no lawful issue,' cried Bridgetina angrily, 'I hate lawful issue, and every thing that is lawful. Persons of enlightened minds ought not, by giving their sanction to an odious institution, to retard the progress of intellect. I never shall marry."

"No!" returned Sir Anthony, archly measuring with his little optics the figure of our heroine, "I believe not, my dear, till you get an offer, he, he, he—what, sour grapes, Miss Biddy, hey?"

'Whether I have an offer or not, sir, is no concern of yours. All you have to do is, to let me have a thousand pounds of my own fortune, which I can now dispose of in a way that will reflect lasting honour on my name, and effectually operate towards the grand end of life, general utility.'

"A thousand pounds!" cried Sir Anthony, in amazement. "What d—ned fools these people in the country are; they know no more of the price of stocks than what's doing in the moon. Time of war, time of peace, loan or no loan, all's the same to them. I'd lay ten pounds to a sixpence, thou can'st not tell what consols were done for any time these three months; and yet ye would sell out, would ye? A pretty ignoramus, truly! You may thank your stars, my dear, that your father left ye in better management. A

thouſand pounds, indeed! And pray, how would your wife head ſpeculate with a thouſand pounds?"

'Your perceptions,' returned Bridgetina, with a contemptuous ſneer, 'your perceptions are too obtuſe to penetrate the ſcope of the grand deſign in which I am about to engage. The virtues of the philoſophers of Africa, with whom I intend ſhortly to aſſociate, are too ſublime for the comprehenſion of a vulgar mind. The——'

"What! going to ſpeculate in Sierra-Leona ſhares, Miſs Wiſehead, are ye? But what, indeed, poor thing, ſhould you know of ſuch matters? Be thankful, again I tell you, be thankful that your father wiſely put you into better hands. No man upon 'Change can tax me with having ever loſt a farthing upon idle ſpeculation. I remember in the year ſixty-ſeven—no—I believe it was in the year ſixty-nine—aye, now I think of it, it was in ſixty-nine, for it was the very day after Mr. Alderman Pruen gave his grand feaſt on being elected in the ward of ——; I remember it well; the turtle ſoup was the very beſt I ever ate in my life. I ſay it was in the year ſixty-nine, juſt as—"

Here Bridgetina made an attempt to interrupt the knight, but in vain; he thus proceeded:

"You ſhall hear—you ſhall hear—I hate to be tedious. Juſt, I ſay, as I turned the corner of 'Change-alley, who ſhould come up to me but Mr. Peter Purdy, brother to Purdy of Yarmouth, the great ſpeculator in whale-blubber. He was a Scotchman; ſo was Peter. Aye, aye; they were both Scotſmen; a ſhrewd fellow, I warrant ye. Thought to take me in! But you ſhall hear. As I was ſaying, juſt as I turned the corner of 'Change-alley, up comes Peter. Now you muſt know,

know, ſtocks had been done for 87¾ for the January account. I was then a bull—I remember it well—Nib, of Bartholomew-lane, was a lame duck, and Tom——"

'I never concern myſelf with any body's ducks,' cried Bridgetina, impatiently, 'I leave the care of the poultry entirely to my mother, and to her you may talk of ſuch matters with propriety; but my energies are directed to nobler objects. Unhappy ſtate of civilization! Odious laws, that put it in a man's power to ſecure his property to his children! If it had not been for them my fortune ſhould have been, ere now, diſſeminated in a direction which—'

'Aye, aye, you may thank your father's will for having one ſhilling to rub upon another, I ſee that. It would all have gone elſe to ſharpers and ſwindlers. Your father did well in conſulting me; did he not? But, indeed, my couſin Botherim was a man of ſenſe; he never took any ſtep without conſulting me. Who, do you think, adviſed his marriage with your mother? Ah! it was an excellent ſpeculation! Six thouſand pounds for a young curate, whoſe whole ſtock lay in the Greek and Latin funds, was no bad job, let me tell ye. I knew how old Paſty would cut up. There was not a better frequented cook-ſhop in London than his. No one made better vermicelli ſoup. I well remember going there once with old Drugget of Lombard-ſtreet, father to Drugget of the Borough; he was partner to Bingley the broker, and did a monſtrous deal of buſineſs. As I was ſaying, we went one day to old Paſty's, your grandfather's—"

'What is my grandfather to me?' cried Bridgetina; 'an illiterate drudge, whoſe energies were all directed to the ſordid purpoſes of accumulation.

on. I once for all desire to have a categorical answer. Will you, or will you not, let me have a thousand pounds of my fortune to dispose of at my own pleasure?"

"A thousand pounds!—no, nor a thousand pence neither; no, nor a single shilling while you remain a spinster, on any pretence whatever; so there's your answer, Miss: will that please you?"

'No, it does not please me; but what can be expected in a state of society so depraved? so—'

"God help the foolish girl, how she talks. Prythee, my dear, where didst thou pick up all this jargon? This is all along of them there foolish books your mother suffers you to read. If I ever caught my daughter so much as opening a book, it should be the dearest day she ever saw. But she is better taught, I promise ye; I don't believe she has looked in one since she came from school; don't know how she should, for not a book has ever been within these doors, but the book of Common-Prayer, and old Robin's almanack. Trust me for that. I know better what to do with my money."

'If you persist in refusing my request of the thousand pounds, I hope at least you will not deny me the trifling sum of twenty guineas for immediate necessaries?'

"What! your last dividend all gone already? It is shameful extravagance. I shall not encourage such profusion, such a squandering of property; at a time, too, when it might be laid out to such advantage! It is monstrous. I tell you I shall not encourage it. Want money to buy books, I suppose—do ye? Is that the way you have spent all that I paid you in August?"

'Yes, man of narrow mind. That sum, which

which would have been ſpent in uſeleſs luxury by a weak, or vilely hoarded by an ignoble, ſpirit, was by me beſtowed to promote the grand object of general utility.'

"' General Fiddleſtick!" exclaimed Sir Anthony.

Bridgetina, without noticing the interruption, went on. 'It was given to the enlightened Citizen Glib to enable him to import from France ſeveral valuable treatiſes on philoſophy and atheiſm.'

"' Philoſophy and atheiſm!" repeated Sir Anthony in a fury. "' Hell and confuſion, who ever heard the like of this? What has made the ſtocks fall forty per cent. but philoſophy and atheiſm? What has raiſed the price of inſurance, and burthened the nation with ſuch a load of new taxes, but philoſophy and atheiſm? Tell me that? Why have we raiſed ſuch an army, aye and ſuch a navy too, but to keep theſe vile French principles out of the kingdom? And yet this here idle girl, this fool, this little viper, ſhall be the means of importing in a box, four feet ſquare, all the principles that it has coſt us ſo many millions of money, and ſo many hundred thouſand lives to keep out of the kingdom! Away, I ſay, and never ſee my face; I would inform on you for a farthing. Was it not for my couſin Botherim's memory, I ſhould give you lodgings you little think of; but you ſhall have no harbour here, d'ye mind me! Never again darken my doors, I deſire you. Never come here again on ſuch an errand."

'Wretched mortal!' cried Bridgetina, 'how deplorable is thy ignorance! Yet,' continued ſhe, in a tone that ſufficiently indicated the violence ſhe did in ſuppreſſing her reſentment: 'yet thou haſt

haſt energies, which, if properly directed, might produce glorious effects. Think not, however, by thy intemperance to intimidate me. He that would adorn himſelf with the moſt elevated qualities of a human being, ought to come prepared for encountering obloquy and miſrepreſentation. When thou art willing to liſten to information, I ſhall be happy to inſtruct thee, till then I take my leave.' So ſaying, ſhe tottered in great agitation to the coach, while the knight returned to his ſeat with an intention of communicating to Mrs. Botherim a full account of the behaviour of her daughter, with a ſevere cenſure upon herſelf for permitting it.

Bridgetina, having given the coachman orders to drive to conduit-ſtreet, pulled up the glaſſes, and throwing herſelf into a corner of the coach, gave way to a burſt of paſſion, which was the more violent for having been ſo long ſuppreſſed.

Anger and diſappointment ſo entirely occupied her mind, that the door was opened for her at Mrs. Benton's, before ſhe recollected that ſhe had not any means of paying the coachman. Her embarraſſment was ſoon removed by her good-natured landlady; to whom, though ſhe was already indebted more than Mrs. Benton's ſlender finances could bear without inconvenience, ſhe did not ſcruple to owe a ſtill farther obligation.

The idea of ſeeing Henry Sydney in the evening baniſhed every diſagreeable impreſſion from her mind. Now, at length, ſhe was to have an opportunity of combating all his objections; now ſhe ſhould have the glory of arguing him into love. A ſpeech which had long been conned, twice written over in a fair hand, and thirteen times repeated in private, was now to prove its efficacy. It was taken from her pocket; the heads

heads again run over; and for the help of memory, in caſeof interruption, a ſort of index taken of the contents, which ſhe thus read aloud, while the maid cleared the table after dinner. *Moral ſenſibility, thinking ſenſibility, importunate ſenſibility; mental ſenſation, pernicious ſtate of protracted and uncertain feeling; congenial ſympathy, congenial ſentiment, congenial ardour; delicious emotions, melancholy emotions, frenzied emotions; tender feeling, energetic feeling, ſublimiſed feeling; the germ, the bud, and the full-grown fruits of general utility, &c. &c.** "Yes," cried ſhe, in extacy, when ſhe had finiſhed the contents, "this will do! Here is argument irreſiſtible; here is a ſeries of calculations, enough to pour conviction on the moſt incredulous mind. Henry overcome ſhall cry—Bridgetina, thou haſt conquered!"

'*Let not him that girdeth on his armour, boaſt as he that throweth it off;*' ſaid a wiſe king of Iſrael. The victory was not quite ſo deciſive on the ſide of Bridgetina as ſhe expected. The prejudices of Henry were invincible. Inſtead of acknowledging the force of her arguments, he laughed at their abſurdity. What ſhe called the ſublime deductions of recondite and abſtract truth, he termed the pernicious deluſions of ſophiſtry; and ſo perverſely erroneous were his ſentiments, that inſtead of admiring the contempt of chaſtity as an

* Note, for the benefit of Novel-writers.—We here generouſly preſent the fair manufacturers in this line with a ſet of phraſes, which, if carefully mixed up with a handful of ſtory, a pretty quantity of moonſhine, an old houſe of any kind, ſo that it be in ſufficient decay, and well tenanted with bats and owls, and two or three ghoſts, will make a couple of very neat volumes. Or ſhould the ſentimental be preferred to the deſcriptive, it is only leaving out the ghoſts, bats, owls, and moon-light, and the above phraſes will ſeaſon any tender tale to taſte.

an exalted proof of female heroiſm and virtue, he perſiſted in reprobating the principles that could lead to ſuch an idea, as deſtructive of the peace, the happineſs, and the well-being of ſociety.

Bridgetina, having gone twice round the circle of her arguments, was at length compelled to give an unwilling hearing to thoſe of Henry. He began by aſſuring her of his friendſhip, and as the beſt proof he could give her of his good wiſhes for her happineſs, pointed out to her in the ſtrongeſt terms the conſequences of her preſent conduct; and earneſtly urged the neceſſity of her immediate return to W——, as the only means of ſaving her from mortification and misfortune. He had at firſt laughed very heartily at her ſtrange notion of his being in love with Mrs. Fielding; but apprehenſive leſt the old lady ſhould be hurt by a hint of any thing ſo ridiculous, he took ſome pains to convince Bridgetina of her miſtake as to the object of his paſſion; at the ſame time declaring, that though delicacy prevented him from mentioning the name of her who poſſeſſed his affections, they were for ever fixed.

"Who can promiſe for ever?" cried Bridgetina. "Are not the opinions of a perfectible being for ever changing? You do not at preſent ſee my preferableneſs, but you may not be always blind to a truth ſo obvious. How can I believe it compatible with the nature of mind, that ſo many ſtrong and reiterated efforts ſhall be productive of no effect? Know, therefore, Doctor Sydney, it is my fixed purpoſe to perſevere. I I ſhall talk, I ſhall write, I ſhall argue, I ſhall purſue you; and if I have the glory of becoming a moral

ral martyr, I ſhall rejoice that it is in the cauſe of general utility."

"If you are reſolved to be a martyr to your own folly, Miſs Botherim,' ſaid Henry, riſing, 'I am determined your friends ſhall not have me to blame in the buſineſs. I ſolemnly aſſure you, this is the laſt time I ſhall ever ſpeak to you, unleſs you ſhew, by your immediate return to W——, that you have recovered a ſenſe of what you owe to yourſelf and to your ſex. Good night.'

Bridgetina called after him in the ſoft tone of perſuaſion, but in vain. The hard-hearted youth hurried down ſtairs, and opening the ſtreet-door for himſelf, was out of hearing in a moment.

To paint he feelings of our heroine, on the abrupt departure of her beloved ſwain, is a taſk leſs ſuited to the pen than the imagination. To the imagination of our readers we ſhall therefore leave it; and content ourſelves with obſerving, that as it is one of the prime advantages of *ſyſtem* to be able to twiſt, and turn, and conſtrue every thing to its own advantage, defeat produces as potent a ſtimulus to perſeverance as victory.

The three following days were employed by Bridgetina in the compoſition of a letter, which ſhe determined ſhould be a maſter-piece of fine writing. It was, indeed, the very eſſence of philoſophy, and flower of eloquence. The ſtile was ſublime and energetic, adorned in every ſentence by ſtrings of double and treble epithets, and all the new-coined noun-verbs and verb-nouns that have of late ſo much enriched the Engliſh language. As to the arguments, the reader muſt have formed a very inadequate idea of Bridgetina's powers, if he does not believe them to be anſwerable. After having carefully taken a copy,

copy, which she resolved should on some future day be generously presented to the public, she consigned the letter to the care of Jenny, with instructions to give it into Henry's own hand, and diligently to observe the expression of his countenance while he perused it.

The twenty minutes of Jenny's absence appeared an age to Bridgetina. She took her station at the window, and at length had the happiness of seeing her messenger of love appear, loaded to her wish, with a packet still larger than her own. "He has written! He has written!" cried she, in an extacy. "He has at length deigned to enter into a discussion on the important truths it has been my glory to promulgate. My *powers* shall be again called forth in an answer. Our correspondence shall be printed. It shall be published. It shall be called *The Sweet Sensations of Sensibility, or the Force of Argument.* But here she comes. Give me the letter. But before I open it, let me know how he received mine? I see by this it must have arrived in a moment of impression. Did he not kiss the seal? Did he not in trembling extacy press it to his throbbing bosom? Tell me, tell me all, I conjure you."

'He did not kiss a bit of it, that I saw, Ma'am,' returned Jenny. 'He only took it out of my hand, and said Pshaw.'

"Pshaw! What does Pshaw signify? What is its etymology? From whence its derivation? I must look to the dictionary. But did you mark his looks, as he perused the important pages? Did you observe where he changed colour, where he appeared struck with admiration, and where thrilled with delight?"

'I could see nothing of all which you says, Ma'am;

Ma'am; for though I told him as how that you desired me to see him prose it, he only said Phoh! and walked into his closet."

"Charming delicacy! But here, here it is that I shall view the portrait of his soul. Here the high-wrought frenzied emotions of his bosom are doubtless pourtrayed. Here——"

'Bless me, Ma'am, how pale you look! Aye, that is the very letter I carried to the gentleman, sure enough. The seal not so much as broken! I'll be bound he never read a word on't Well now I wow I never saw a more ungenteeler thing done in all my life; and if I was you, Ma'am, (thof to be sure, you must know best) but I should ha' my fingers burnt before I should write another sulleabul to such a grumpish sort of a gentleman.'

"My epistle of fourteen pages, my precious essay on philosophy and love, returned without a perusal—returned in a blank cover! O hideous perversion of intellect! O prejudices, obstinate and invincible! Has he no sense of justice, no sense of the duty he owes society, that he thus deprives of her usefulness one of its most valuable members? O Jenny, Jenny, I can energize no longer. The freezing frost of frigid apathy chills my powers. The morbid excess of a distempered imagination choaks the germ of general utility! I shall become a wanderer in the barren wilderness of society, an useless plant in the populous desart of human life! Leave me, leave me to myself, that I may in apt soliloquy give vent to the palpitating perturbation of my woestruck fancy."

'Good la! what a power o' fine words you ha, Ma'am, just at your fingers' ends too, as a body may say. I never did hear so fine a spoken lady in all my life. But, well-a-day! the men care

no

no more for a woman's words, if ſo be as how that ſhe happens to be a little ordinary or ſo, than for the ſqueaking of a pig. But I would deſpiſe the fellors, ſo I would—and ſo I does. I walors not e'er a man in the world the walor of a ruſh!'

Bridgetina again ſignified her pleaſure to be left alone, and Jenny, not a little pleaſed with having been ſo far admitted to her confidence, haſtened to diſburthen herſelf of all ſhe knew of the late tranſaction, to the very firſt perſon that would give her the hearing.

While Bridgetina was eloquently bemoaning the indignant treatment of her letter in the drawing-room, and Jenny expatiating on the ſame ſubject (though, perhaps, in terms not exactly ſimilar) in the kitchen; the whole ſoul of Henry was entirely occupied, not with Bridgetina, nor with her love, nor with her letter, but with the contents of one he had juſt received from his father; and in the peruſal of which he had been interrupted by Miſs Botherim's meſſenger. The old gentleman's epiſtle was as follows:

"*My dear Henry*,

"IT would be ſuperfluous to dwell upon the pleaſure your letters have afforded to thoſe moſt dearly intereſted in your happineſs. Though far from conſidering fortune as the "one thing needful," the excluſive object of purſuit, I cannot but with thankfulneſs contemplate your opening proſpects of honourable independence. May the Giver of all good beſtow upon you *a heart to enjoy*, a mind ſuperior to the reſtleſſneſs of ambition, and ſtranger to the gnawings of diſcontent. For the attainment of theſe happy diſpoſitions, without which increaſe of fortune is but increaſe of ſorrow, I know no better means (next to an habitual

habitual dependence on the Divine favour) than the purſuit of ſcience, particularly thoſe branches of it that are moſt intimately connected with your profeſſion.

'I am delighted with the ſucceſs of your chemical experiments, and ſtill more highly ſatisfied with the ingenuous frankneſs you diſplay in ſo candidly acknowledging your former errors. But ſuch muſt ever be the conſequence of directing our reſearches, not into the wild and fruitleſs regions of idle ſpeculation, where the chimeras of fancy are miſtaken for realities, and bold conjecture aſſumes the authoritative tone of truth; but into thoſe laws of nature that, by being objects of ſenſe, and ſubject to the inveſtigation of experiment, are within the graſp of our limited and feeble minds.

"Such ſpeculations have, indeed, a direct tendency to influence the moral character of man. It is this that ſtamps them with their real value; for to whatever height we aſcend in tracing the cauſes which regulate the ſyſtem of the world, our views muſt at laſt terminate in an uncauſed Being, in whom all the beauty and order, all the wiſdom and power, diſplayed throughout the univerſe, are centered. "When we look around us," ſays an amiable philoſopher, in the concluſion of a volume that preſented a valuable diſcovery to the world, "When we look around us, we perceive that every part of the material world is governed by general laws; and when we reflect that in this vaſt ſyſtem of things, a race of beings exiſts, to whom the Deity has communicated a portion of his intelligence and activity, we cannot avoid concluding, that laws muſt have been ordained for the government of ſuch beings,

as

as well as for that of all other parts of the universe."*

"Thus does the ſtudy of Nature lead us up to Nature's God. Thus does the material world itſelf give evidence to the probability of a revelation, and to thoſe whoſe minds have been expanded by the contemplation of the union of grandeur and ſimplicity in the works of creation, it muſt be peculiarly delightful to obſerve the ſame union of grandeur and ſimplicity characteriſing the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

"Yes, my ſon, believe me, the more you ſtudy the life and precepts of our great Maſter, the more forcibly will you be ſtruck with the congruity at which I have already hinted. But, alas! as in the infancy of natural philoſophy, the ill-directed diligence of the chemiſt was waſted upon trifles, while the grand laws of nature were unnoticed and unknown; ſo in the Chriſtian world, has the zeal of believers been more ſtrenuouſly exerted in the ſupport of non-important forms and dogmas, than in the promulgation of thoſe grand and ſimple truths which are marked with the ſignet of Nature's God.

"I need not apologize to you, my dear Harry, for being led into a ſubject which, though the moſt important, as well as the moſt exalted, of which human beings can treat, it is, I know, deemed a breach of politeneſs to hint at even to a friend; but ſhall confeſs, that the impreſſion made upon my mind by the converſation I held with Captain Delmond on his death-bed, has given an unuſual degree of ſolemnity to the train of my ideas. Indeed the misfortunes of that unhappy

* Treatiſe on Animal Heat and Combuſtion. By Adair Crawford, M. D.

happy family, as well as the misery that has overtaken some others of this place, so evidently originate in false impressions received of religion, as a gloomy and illiberal system of superstition, that I cannot cease from deploring the neglect of early information on this important point, as the foundation of those mistaken prejudices that are fraught with consequences so fatal to the happiness of society.

"While Captain Delmond was taught to idolise the name of *honour*, as the palladium of human virtue, religion was presented to his mind as a mean and inferior principle, incapable of inspiring noble sentiments in the soul of a gentleman. Had not the avenues to investigation been thus pre-occupied by prejudice, he would have discovered that *honour*, which is nothing more than a nice susceptibility to the censure or applause of mankind, is neither so grand in its views, so extensive in its operation, nor so noble in its object, as that principle which teaches the heart to appeal for its purity and integrity, not to the purblind judgment of our fellow-mortals, but to a Being of infinite purity and perfection. While performing a part on the busy stage of life, Captain Delmond found honour competent to the purpose of gaining him the flattering approbation of the multitude, which was reverberated by self-applause; but when he proposed it as the sole principle of action to his daughter, when he deprived her mind of the supporting aid of religion, and desired her to consider the intrinsic excellence of virtue as its own sure and only reward, he was not aware how liable she was to be taught by sophistry a definition of virtue very opposite to his. Had a proper value for the morality of the Gospel, enhanced by its gracious promises and elevated

elevated views, been inſtilled into her tender mind, his child, his darling Julia, would not have brought the grey hairs of her father with ſorrow to the grave.

"The remains of this unhappy gentleman were yeſterday conſigned to their parent duſt in military ſtate, and with a degree of magnificence, an oſtentatious parade of pomp and grandeur, that, in my opinion, was ill-ſuited to the occaſion. After the concluſion of the ceremony, Gen. Villers and a Major Minden, (a man of large fortune, who, it ſeems, had made propoſals to Miſs Delmond) politely waited on the poor forlorn and diſconſolate widow, and took their leave of her in terms of the moſt courtly civility. I expected that the General, who was no ſtranger to the poverty to which ſhe was reduced, would have come forward with ſome generous offer of pecuniary aſſiſtance. But no: the General's generoſity was completely expended in producing the parade of half an hour's proceſſion; and I greatly queſtion, whether he ever does Mrs. Delmond the honour of another viſit.

"After the departure of theſe great gentlemen, I was called out of the room by Quinten, the Captain's old domeſtic, on whoſe face was painted the ſincerity of ſorrow; he beckoned me into the back-parlour, and having once or twice, with a ſtroke of his hard hand, driven away the tears that fell upon his furrowed cheek, "I thought, ſir," ſaid he, "when I ſaw the lid of the coffin ſcrewed down upon my good maſter, that I had lived too long. When I heard the hammer knock upon the laſt nail, my heart ſo ſunk at every ſtroke, it made a coward of me, and I ſhould have been glad to have ſkulked to the quiet garriſon of death. But then, when I thought on

my

my poor miſtreſs, and remembered how my poor dear maſter loved her, I ſcorned to be ſo cowardly as to deſert my poſt, when, by fighting with life a little longer, I might ſave her from being ſtormed by want. I know all I can do is but a trifle—a nothing, as a body may ſay, to folks that are any way above the world, but it may be of uſe to her for all that; and ſo, as I hear you are going to look into my maſter's papers, and to ſee what can be made out for my poor miſtreſs, I thought it beſt to tell you to take my penſion into the account."

"Your penſion, Quinten! and what do you reſerve for yourſelf?"

'Nothing but what I can earn by my own labour. Thank GOD, I am not yet paſt working. You ſee how well I have dreſſed the Captain's garden. It was I that made that pretty ſerpentine walk for Miſs Julia, and planted all them flowers, of which ſhe uſed to be ſo fond. Alas! that I ſhould ever live to ſee the day of her deſerting them! Oh, who would have thought it! ſuch a pretty creature as ſhe was, and ſo mild-ſpoken, and ſo good to every body, that ſhe ſhould after all go for to break her father's heart!'

"Well, but, honeſt Quinten, you do not conſider that you are now in the decline of life, and cannot long be able to labour as you have done."

'I know it, ſir. I am growing old apace, but Sam Smith, the old gardener at Beausfield, is ten years older than I am, and he ſtill keeps his place. I am a ſtouter man than he at any time. And ſo, dy'e ſee, I am determined not to touch a farthing of this here Chelſea penſion while I am able to lift a ſpade. Did not I get it by the good word of my maſter; a nd who, then, has ſo good a right to it as his widow? Here are

twelve guineas beſides, which, I humbly beg, you would fall on ſome means to make her accept; for I know ſhe would not touch it, if ſhe thought it came from me. So pray don't let her know who ſent it; for folks in affliction ought to be mighty tenderly dealt with, ſo as not to hurt their pride—*feelings*, I believe, my young miſtreſs would have called it, but I am not learned enough to know the difference.'

"Honeſt, worthy Quinten!" cried I, graſping his hand, "thou haſt a heart that doth honour to thy ſpecies, and principles that are more eſtimable than all the learning in the world. At a period when neither talents nor learning ſhall avail, thy gratitude and thy virtues ſhall exalt thee to glory!" I was ſo ſtruck by the nobleneſs of this poor fellow's behaviour, that I could not avoid giving you the converſation in detail. I ſhall be more brief with regard to what followed, though for the honour of your friend I ought there likewiſe to be particular.

"On examining the books and papers of the deceaſed, it appeared, that all which remained to the widow was the houſe and furniture, and twenty-five pounds a year from an annuity-aſſociation, of which her huſband had been a member. I had planned an application to Mrs. Fielding for doubling this ſum, when Mr. Churchill generouſly ſtepped forward, and with a delicacy that enhanced the merit of his generoſity declared, that though the tranſaction did not appear in any of the Captain's papers he was truſtee for an annuity of an hundred pounds to Mrs. Delmond, which as long as ſhe remained a widow, ſhould be regularly paid at the terms of Lady-Day and Michaelmas.

"I know how you will rejoice in the noble conduct

conduct of your friend, but I believe I ſhould have left the deſcription of it to your ſiſter, whoſe lively ſenſibility to all that is great and excellent would have done that juſtice to the ſubject of which my tired pen is now incapable. From her own lips, however, you will ſhortly have an opportunity of receiving it; and I do not think ſhe will ſuffer any circumſtance that attended it to loſe in the recital.

"Sadly ſhall I feel the dear girl's abſence, whoſe company is the ſolace of my heart. The ſweetneſs of her temper, the harmonious cheerfulneſs of her diſpoſition, might ſoften the rugged breaſt of a tyrant, and ſoothe the moſt boiſterous paſſions into peace; to me they are enhanced by a mind of quick intelligence, whoſe cultivation has been the ſweeteſt and the eaſieſt taſk of my whole life. I muſt, however, carefully conceal from her the pain her abſence ſhall occaſion me; as otherwiſe, I know all the pleaſure Mrs. Fielding has prepared for her would be deſtroyed. She and her friend Miſs Orwell are now buſily employed in preparing for their purpoſed expedition, to which they look forward with the happy ardour of juvenile expectation. The kind conſideration of Mrs. Fielding, in inviting Miſs Orwell to partake with Maria in the ſcenes of novelty and amuſement, where their reciprocal feelings of ſurpriſe and pleaſure muſt enhance their mutual delight, is a new proof of the goodneſs of her heart. Harriet does not, however, expreſs her reliſh for the journey in the ſame manner as Maria. The emotion with which ſhe now ſpeaks of it, is leſs gay, and apparently more conſtrained. When firſt informed that her father had given his conſent to her acceptance of Mrs. Fielding's invitation, ſhe, indeed, appeared

agitated in a greater degree than I ſhould have expected from a girl of her underſtanding; but that I ſuppoſe was from the mere love of novelty, a charm that never fails to operate ſtrongly on the youthful breaſt. This day fortnight is fixed on for the day of their departure, Dr Orwell is himſelf to be their eſcort, and Mr. Churchill likewiſe propoſes being of the party; Mrs. Botherim has delayed her journey, in order to have their company upon the road, ſo that they will fill two chaiſes, and, if no accident interpoſes, have the promiſe of a pleaſant journey.

"Meantime I ſhall be left to the enjoyment of my own reflections; but, thank GOD, theſe are not diſagreeable companions. I can look upon the paſt with comfort, and to the future without diſmay. In the happineſs of my children I am more than happy. O may this deareſt of all felicities be my companion and my ſolace through all the ſhort ſpace that now remains for me to tread! May they never cauſe me a ſigh of ſorrow, as, thanks to Heaven, they have never tinged my cheeks with the bluſh of anger or of ſhame. GOD bleſs thee, my dear Harry, prays your tenderly affectionate father,

"H. SYDNEY."

P. S. I find I have committed a ſad blunder, in telling you of the intended journey to London. It was to have been a ſecret, it ſeems, and much pleaſure did the girls promiſe themſelves in your ſurpriſe. It is in vain I preach to Maria about the ſin it would be to deprive you of the pleaſure of anticipation, which, alas! makes up ſuch a mighty part of the ſmall ſum of human happineſs. They inſiſt upon my writing the laſt part of my letter over again, but my fingers are already

already cramped, ſo it muſt go; and when you read it, you may go to your glaſs, and tell them how you looked when you ſee them; for it is their curioſity as to this important point, that I now find to be their reaſon for ſecrecy. God help them! poor things! Adieu!

CHAP. XIII.

" —— He was a ſhrewd philoſopher,
" And had read every text and gloſs over.
" Whate'er the crabbed'ſt author hath,
" He underſtood b' implicit faith.

" All which he underſtood by rote,
" And as occaſion ſerv'd, wou'd quote."

BUTLER.

"HARRIET Orwell coming up to town by invitation from Mrs. Fielding!" exclaimed Henry. "How extraordinary! Is it in order to gratify my wiſhes, or to try my prudence, that ſhe at this juncture brings her to London? No matter which; I ſhall ſee my Harriet; I ſhall hear her ſweet voice; I ſhall have the delight of being near her almoſt continually. Dear Mrs. Fielding, how I bleſs thee!"

In the midſt of this delirium of pleaſure, Henry was interrupted by the arrival of Miſs Botherim's letter. Of the manner of its reception it is unneceſſary to repeat the particulars, as they have already been given ſo minutely by Jenny, whoſe faithful report of all that fell from Henry's lips upon the occaſion, juſtly entitles her to our

applauſe. No ſooner had he re-delivered the important packet into the hands of Bridgetina's meſſenger, than he ſtept to Mrs. Fielding's, on pretence of informing her of the contents of his father's letter, but in reality to endeavour to penetrate into her motives for inviting Miſs Orwell to accompany his ſiſter to London. In vain did he watch her countenance, while ſhe peruſed that part of the epiſtle which had cauſed him ſuch extreme emotion; he only ſaw it lighted up with a benignant ſmile. "How much is Maria, how much are we all indebted to your goodneſs!" cried he; "how happy have you made me—I—mean, how—"

'You mean, I ſuppoſe, that it was good-natured of me to provide your ſiſter with a companion, that ſhe might not be altogether confined to the ſociety of an old woman, which you know from experience to be ſufficiently tireſome. You ſee how well I can explain for you.'

"The ſociety of Mrs. Fielding muſt ever——"

'Be ſuperior in your opinion to that of a young and pretty girl, I ſuppoſe; but as Maria may be of a different way of thinking, I imagined a companion of her own age would be no diſagreeable circumſtance to her; and as I wiſhed to pay my old acquaintance, Dr. Orwell, a compliment, I thought I could not do it at an eaſier rate than by inviting his daughter to ſpend a few weeks in London. But, pray, who is this Mr. Churchill? He ſeems a character that is worth the knowing, and I muſt deſire you would introduce him to me whenever he comes to town.'

"I ſhall have a pride in preſenting him to you as my earlieſt and deareſt friend; and one I can with confidence, pronounce worthy of the honour of your acquaintance."

'Does he reſide at W——?'

"He

"He was brought up by a rich uncle, whose eſtate ſurrounds the village, but who was ſuch a miſer, that, though Churchill was his only near relation, and a deſerved favourite, he could hardly be prevailed upon to afford him the education of a gentleman. My friend's genius was rather ſtimulated than repreſſed by the obſtacles which his uncles' avarice threw in the way of his improvement. His intimacy with me brought him frequently to our houſe, where his thirſt after knowledge was encouraged and gratified by the leſſons of my father. The expences attending an univerſity education would for ever have deterred the old gentleman from permitting him to proſecute his ſtudies in a profeſſional manner, had it not fortunately occurred to him, that by having a lawyer in his own family, he might gratify his love of litigation without the expence of a fee."

'Admirably calculated! He took care, I preſume, that the young gentleman's ſtudies ſhould not be interrupted by thoſe ingenious contrivances for getting rid of ſuperfluous cath, that occupy ſo much of the time and talents of our young gentlemen of faſhion at the univerſity!'

"Alas! poor Charles! His ingenuity was, indeed, very differently employed. His moſt rigid economy was neceſſary to preſerve the appearance of a gentleman; and the purchaſe of books, and attending lectures on ſuch ſubjects of literature or ſcience as were not immediately connected with his profeſſion, was all ſtolen from his ſlender allowance of pocket-money. Yet theſe circumſtances, then conſidered as ſo mortifying, he now regards as fortunate. But for theſe he might have been drawn into the vortex of diſſipation, and in the wild career of pleaſure have loſt his taſte for ſcience, and regard to virtue."

'Too truly obſerved,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding; 'and in my opinion, the abundance of pocket-money, with which every ſchool-boy is now furniſhed, has done as much towards the rapid progreſs of depravity, as any circumſtance whatever. I hope your friend's ſucceſs at the bar has been equal to his merit.'

"It has at leaſt far exceeded his moſt ſanguine expectations," returned Henry. "But the honour that has accrued to him from undertaking the cauſe of a helpleſs family, who, but for his generous aid, might have periſhed in obſcurity and want, has deſervedly raiſed his reputation into celebrity. Indeed, his whole conduct has given an ample proof that the profeſſion of the law is not neceſſarily a narrower of the human heart."

'Narrow and illiberal muſt be his heart, that can ſo pronounce of it,' returned Mrs Fielding. 'It is, like other profeſſions, open to men of unprincipled, as well as to virtuous, minds; and the ſelfiſh paſſions have there, perhaps, as wide a field for their operation as in any other. But, thank heaven, we need not go to the records of former ages, for illuſtrious inſtances of lawyers, whoſe eminent talents have been more than equalled by their exalted virtues."

Henry again endeavoured to turn the converſation to the ſubject that engroſſed his thoughts, but in vain. He could not obtain from Mrs. Fielding the ſmalleſt ſatisfaction relative to Miſs Orwell's viſit: ſhe ſo ſedulouſly avoided coming to any explanation, that he left her without being able in the leaſt degree to penetrate her intentions.

Leaving Henry to purſue

"The idle phantaſies of love.
"Whoſe miſeries delight,"

we return to Bridgetina. Her abſtract reaſoning and moſt profound reflections on the unenlightened conduct of her lover, received a very unſeaſonable interruption from Mrs. Benton. That good woman, after a modeſt preface of many apologies for the liberty ſhe was compelled to take, preſented her an account of the ſum due for a fortnight's lodging; which, together with what had been diſburſed for other neceſſaries, amounted to ſeven guineas.

"Seven guineas!" ſaid Bridgetina; "it is an unnatural ſtate of civilization, in which ſeven guineas can be ſpent ſo ſoon. But my mind cannot at preſent deſcend to the vulgar concerns of common life. You may leave your bill, however, and when the preſent romantic, high-wrought, frenzied emotions of my perturbed ſpirit have a little ſubſided, I ſhall enter into an examination of the contents."

'I am extremely ſorry to diſturb you, Madam,' returned Mrs. Benton, 'but ſhall be really much obliged to you, if you can poſſibly make it convenient to ſettle it at preſent. I make a point of paying all our trades-people ſo regularly, that I ſhall be quite diſtreſſed at not being able to diſcharge the butcher's bill, and he is to return for the money in the evening.'

"Regularity," rejoined Bridgetina, "is a characteriſtic of common honeſty, that *non-conductor to all the ſympathies of the human heart*; that *infallible proof of mediocrity, to which it is impoſſible that any thing great, magnanimous, or ardent, can be allied.*"* Punctuality in the diſcharge of one's debts is held in deſerved contempt by the illuſtrious and eccentric part of mankind;

* See Enquirer.

kind; in whoſe eye common honeſty is a nuiſance, reprobated and abhorred."

'It is, indeed, as you ſay, Ma'am, but common honeſty to pay one's debts; and too often is it neglected by thoſe who ought to ſet a better example. Oh, if my daughters and I were but regularly paid for our embroidery by the fine ladies for whom we work, we ſhould then be but too happy, for we ſhould then have nothing to care for. But great folks do not know the degree of miſery they often inflict by their careleſſneſs; they are too highly exalted out of the ſphere (as one may ſay) of their fellow-creatures to caſt a thought upon the difficulties of thoſe who are to earn their bread by labour. I myſelf know ladies who never refuſe to open their purſes to charity, but who, if they had paid their tradeſmen with punctuality, might have preſerved ſome honeſt families from ruin."

"*Want of punctuality has for time immemorial ſupplied materials for invective againſt great and extraordinary characters*,* returned Bridgetina. It is, as I ſaid before, a breach of common honeſty; and greatly is it to be regretted, that common honeſty ſhould ſo long have gained the applauſe of an injudicious world. But when mankind ſhall have been ſufficiently enlightened by philoſophy, utterly to diſcard the ignoble prejudices of religion, regard to common honeſty will ceaſe. Bleſſed æra! when a fair character ſhall be no longer deemed eſſential! When promiſes ſhall be no longer binding! And when men who have *practically proved themſelves the peſts and enemies of their ſpecies*, ſhall be eſtimated according to their energies; and for acts, which would in the preſent

diſtempered

* See Enquirer.

diſtempered ſtate of civilization, be deemed worthy of the gallows, receive the applauſe due to their *eminent talents and uncommom generoſity!*"

'I cannot expreſs myſelf ſo finely as you do, Ma'am, but I believe what you obſerve is very juſt; that though morals are badly enough attended to at preſent, God knows, yet if religion were baniſhed from the world, (which Heaven forbid!) it would be far worſe.' Again laying the bill before Bridgetina on the table, ſhe begged her to peruſe it at her leiſure, and after making a ſecond apology for her intruſion, left the room.

"Unnatural ſtate of civilization!' cried Bridgetina, as ſoon as ſhe was alone; "Odious and depraved ſociety, where every thing one eats, or drinks, or wears, muſt neceſſarily be paid for! Oh, wiſe and enlightened Hottentots! ye alone of all mankind have attained to that ſtate of perfection ſo charmingly deſcribed by the philoſopher! where the evils of co-operation are avoided, where pecuniary rewards for labour are unknown, and a bleſſed ſtate of equality gives vigour to the intellect, and rouſes the ſublime energies of the ſoul. Oh, that I were in the midſt of the Gonoquais horde! there no mercenary demand for the rent of my lodgings, no fares to hackney-coachmen, no bills from laundreſſes, nor butchers, nor bakers, nor grocers, nor ſhoemakers, nor chandlers, nor glovers, would interrupt the ſublime ſpeculations of my towering fancy; but each congenial Hottentot, energizing in his ſelf-built ſhed, would be too much engroſſed by forming projects for general utility to break in upon my repoſe!"

Some hours were thus ſpent by our heroine in deprecating the odious inſtitutions of the ſociety in which it was unhappily her lot to live, before ſhe thought of any method of extricating herſelf

from

from her preſent embarraſſment. It at length, however, very fortunately occurred to her recollection, that ſhe had, on the day of her fruitleſs application to the city knight, obſerved the words *Money Lent* inſcribed upon the door-poſts of a ſhop in Oxford-ſtreet.

"Happy circumſtance!" cried ſhe, as ſoon as the thought occurred; "How fortunate was it, that by taking that road to the city, I ſhould become acquainted with the abode of this philanthropiſt. Thus it is that events generate each other! Had Alexander the Great never bathed in the Cydnus, Shakeſpeare would never have written * Had I gone by the Strand, I might not have known, that even in this depraved and unnatural ſtate of civilization, men are to be found, who, convinced of the immoral tendency of accumulation, promote the glorious æra of equality by diſtributing their ſuperfluous wealth. Let me haſten to the abode of this enlightened perſon, who will doubtleſs deem it a duty to ſupply my wants."

Delighted with this idea, ſhe haſtily threw on her cloak, and proceeded without delay to the place where the advertiſement had arreſted her attention. The place was eaſily found. She entered, and inſtantly demanded an audience of the enlightened perſonage who had notified the generous intention of lending money. His wife was the perſon to whom ſhe addreſſed herſelf; who told her, that Mr. Poppem was then engaged with a cuſtomer in the parlour, but that ſhe could do her buſineſs equally well.

"My buſineſs," replied Bridgetina, "is to converſe with the man you call your huſband; for

* See Pol. Juſt.

for that he is your husband I can scarcely suppose, as it is little likely that a philosopher, who is convinced of the immoral tendency of accumulation, should give encouragement to a monopoly so pernicious as marriage."

'Dy'e mean to tell me, that I am not an honest woman?' cried the shopkeeper's wife in an enraged voice.

"An honest woman is a very mean and vulgar appellation for a person who acts upon principles of abstract virtue," rejoined Bridgetina. "I make no doubt that your virtues are sublime; and it is the high idea I have conceived of Mr. Poppem's, that now brings me here. Pray let him know, that a person of no mean energies wishes to converse with him."

The sight of Bridgetina's large gold watch, which, in spite of the change of fashion, she still wore suspended from her apron-string by its massy chain of the same precious metal, operated as a more powerful pacifier of the good woman's resentment than all the arguments of philosophy. Without farther hesitation, she conducted our heroine to the inner chamber of Mr. Poppem, a place peculiarly dedicated to the mysteries of his profession; where, like a bronze statue that has been accidentally pushed into some ill-assorted wardrobe, he sat half-hid from view by piles of gowns, petticoats, great-coats, &c. A wretched-looking female stood before him, with a half-starved infant in her arms.

"And will you really give no more?" cried the supplicant in a feeble voice.

'No more!' returned Poppem; 'no, not a shilling more, if it was to save you from the gallows. There's ne'er a pawn-broker in London would ha' gi'n you the half on't on that there trash; so you may take up your money, and be gone.'

"I must

"I muſt ſo!" returned the woman, with a heavy ſigh; and taking up a few ſhillings that lay on a ſmall table, ſhe preſſed her infant to her breaſt. "Yes, deareſt," ſaid ſhe, "you ſhall now have bread!" The child turned up its languid eyes to her pale face, which was bedewed with tears. She again preſſed it to her boſom, and departed.

'I beg your pardon, Miſs,' cried Mr. Poppem, on perceiving Bridgetina. 'I purteſt I have been ſo bothered by that there woman, and her tales of a cock and bull, that I did not obſerve you. Theſe ſort of paupers are ſuch troublefome people to have any dealings with, that for my ſhare, I declare I never wiſh to ſee one of them enter my ſhop. But pray, what is your demand, Miſs?'

"I come, enlightened citizen," replied Bridgetina, "I come to inform myſelf of your motives, to enquire into your principles, and to convince you that I am entitled to a ſhare in the property which, I make no doubt, it is your ſtudy to diſtribute according to the unerring rules of moral juſtice."

'Juſtice!' returned the pawn-broker; 'What d'ye mean by juſtice? I never was before any juſtice, but Juſtice Trap, in all my life; and then no one dared to ſay that black was the white of my eye. I ſtands upon my character. I deals upon the fair and the ſquare. All open and above-board. I am no reſetter of ſtolen goods—no abettor of robbery—no——'

"I underſtand you," ſaid Bridgetina, interrupting him. "The unequal diſtribution of property may, undoubtedly, be termed a robbery; and *all exiſting abuſes are to be deprecated only as they ſerve to increaſe and perpetuate the inequality of conditions.**

When

* See Pol. Juſt. vol. ii.

When mankind are ſufficiently illuminated, every perſon, poſſeſſed of property, will act as you, Mr. Poppem, now do. What I want particularly to know, is your mode of eſtimating the worth of individuals; or, in other words, the criterion by which you judge of capacity?"

'Produce the pledge, Miſs,' ſaid Mr. Poppem; 'and if I don't eſtimate it as fairly as e'er a pawn-broker in London, you ſhall ha' the money for nothing.'

"What proof of powers or energies can the narrow limits of one ſhort converſation afford?" returned Bridgetina. "I am, however, prepared to diſcuſs, to inveſtigate, to argue, to energize, to——"

Here the voice of a perſon in the front-ſhop attracted the attention of our heroine. She ſtopped to liſten, and inſtantly recognized the peculiar dialect of her townſman, Mr. Glib. "How fortunate!" cried ſhe opening the ſlight door that ſeparated the place ſhe was in from the outer ſhop. "See how events generate each other!" holding out her hand to Mr. Glib.

'Ha! Citizeneſs Botherim!' cried Glib. 'How do, chuck? Glad to ſee you. Didn't think to meet ye here, though. Doſt not come to Pop, ſurely?'

Bridgetina immediately informed her brother illumine of the motives of her viſit to Mr. Poppem, at which he laughed ſo immoderately as to incur no ſmall degree of our heroine's reſentment.

'Can't help it, for my ſoul,' cried Glib, breaking into another immoderate fit of laughter. 'Take a pawn-broker for a philoſopher! How comical! But never mind; better than us come for caſh. Can't help me to any? Curſedly out at elbows. Citizen Vall no better than a ſcoundrel.

drel. Sold my books to Lackington, and gone off with the cash. Left me without a sixpence. Can lend me five pounds, I hope.'

"No, really," returned Bridgetina, "I have not at present so much as five shillings in my possession, and came here in hopes of receiving a supply for myself."

'So you can,' returned Glib. 'Get it on your watch. No watches among the Hottentots. No baubles, nor trinkets, nor gewgaws, in a reasonable state of society. Give it to me. Get you the money in a twinkling. How much dost want?'

"Ten guineas will do for my immediate exigencies," replied Bridgetina, putting the watch into his hands.

'Say no more,' cried Glib. 'Shalt have it in a moment.' Then skipping across the shop, he entered Mr. Poppem's apartment without ceremony, and in a few minutes returned with fifteen pounds and a duplicate. The latter he put into the hands of Bridgetina, with the ten-pound note. 'Ten will serve your turn,' said he, and five is just what I want myself. Shall pay it in a trice.'

"But when?" cried Bridgetina, perceiving him about to leave her. "When shall I see you? I shall want the money in a few days, and you do'nt know where to find me."

"Never make promises,' cried Glib. 'Nothing so immoral. Damps my energies to see a creditor. Preserve your energies, my dear. That's it! Energies do all!' So saying he skipped out of the shop, and mingling with the croud, was quickly out of sight.

Bridgetina, forgetting at that moment the immoral tendency of punctuality, was extremely disconcerted

diſconcerted by the ſudden departure of Glib without a promiſe of repayment. The illuminated citizen's contempt of common honeſty ſhe knew to be as far ſuperior to her own, as practice is to theory; but though ſhe ought, upon her own principles, to have made a point of conceding to him the larger ſum, as being the more deſerving individual, yet either through the operation of ſome latent prejudice or of ſome pre-diſpoſing cauſes generated in the eternity that preceded her birth, ſhe felt more inclined at that moment to relieve the preſſing difficulties of her own ſituation, than to pay attention to the probably ſtill more preſſing difficulties by which he was embarraſſed. Replete with chagrin and diſappointment, ſhe ſlowly returned to her lodgings; and having diſcharged Mrs. Benton's bill, retired to her own apartment, to muſe in ſolitude and ſilence on the many miſeries that overſpread the barren wilderneſs of ſociety.

CHAP. XIV.

"He little recks the woes which wait
"To ſcare his dreams of joy;
"Nor thinks to-morrow's alter'd fate
"May all thoſe dreams deſtroy."

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

SLOWLY, in the opinion of Henry, did the hours move on, till the day that brought his ſiſter and her fair companion to London. At length the ſun aroſe that was to light them on their

their journey, and never did aſtronomer with more anxiety watch its progreſs on the day of the tranſit of a planet, than did Henry on this occaſion. He had formed the deſign of meeting them at Barnet, and having ordered his ſervant to procure horſes, mounted about three o'clock, and ſet off full ſpeed, in hopes of ſurpriſing them by his appearance at the Red-Lion, which he expected to reach before their arrival.

The day had been unuſually fine for the ſeaſon, but by the time he had got to Highgate, the ſky became obſcured, and a thick fog gradually ſpread over the face of the country. Cheered by the proſpect in his "mind's eye," he puſhed forward, and having obtained the riſing ground in the middle of Finchley-Common, obſerved with palpitating delight the approach of two poſt-chaiſes, which he doubted not contained the friends he was in queſt of. Riding briſkly up to the firſt of the carriages, the glaſſes of which were all up, he called to the poſtillion to ſtop. The poſt-boy obeyed. Immediately the front glaſs was let down, and the kindly greetings of Henry anſwered by the firing of a piſtol! At the ſame moment two perſons leaped from the carriage, and holding their piſtols to the ſuppoſed highwayman, laid hold of the bridle, which had dropped from his hand.

"Have you enough?" cried one of the gentlemen.

'Yes,' returned Henry; 'and when you have diſcovered your miſtake, you will probably think I have had too much.'

Henry's ſervant being neither ſo well mounted as his maſter, nor inſpired with an equal degree of impatience, had fallen conſiderably behind. He darted forward at the report of the piſtol, and

and ſeeing his maſter (as he imagined) in the hands of footpads, he called out for help.

The gentleman who had fired the piſtol, had, from the appearance of Henry, and ſtill more from his manner of ſpeaking, begun to have ſome apprehenſions of his miſtake. The appearance of the ſervant gave additional ſtrength to his ſurmiſes.

"Wherefore did you ſtop the carriage?" cried he, in a voice rather leſs violent than his former tone.

'I expected to meet with friends,' ſaid Henry, 'and confeſs I owe the accident entirely to my own imprudence. Whatever may be its conſequences, you, ſir, are acquitted of all blame."

"Curſe on my raſhneſs!" cried the gentleman; "but I hope, ſir, you are not much hurt?"

'Not mortally, I truſt,' returned Henry. 'From my feelings, I ſhould ſuppoſe the ball to be lodged in my ſhoulder: the wound in my arm will ſignify nothing.'

"A brave fellow, by my ſhoul!" exclaimed a perſon who at that moment came up from the ſecond carriage. "I hope you will ſoon be after ſettling the matter honourably, my dear, and be able to call him to account for taking a highwayman for a jontleman."

'I can only blame my own imprudence,' ſaid Henry.

"*You* may forgive me," ſaid the gentleman, graſping Henry's hand; "but I never ſhall forgive myſelf. But let us not delay. My ſervant ſhall ride your horſe, while you take his place in the carriage with me. I ſhall be miſerable till the wound has been examined. Pray let us make haſte."

'The

'The jontleman may do as he plaſes,' ſaid the other traveller, 'but by my ſhoul, my dear, when you travel through the county of Galway you had better take care how you pop at a jontleman, without giving him a chance of returning your fire!'

"I ſhall accept your offer with pleaſure, ſir," ſaid Henry, without paying any attention to his obſervation, "and hope I ſhall have reaſon to rejoice in the accident, as giving me the acquiſition of a friend."

The Iriſhman ſhrugged up his ſhoulders, and returned to his chaiſe; while Henry, with the aſſiſtance of the ſtranger, diſmounted from his horſe, and had placed his foot upon the ſtep of the chaiſe, when the rattling noiſe of carriages advancing quickly towards them attracted his attention. It was now ſo dark, that they were quite near before they could be diſtinctly ſeen.

'Has any accident happened?' cried a voice, which Henry knew to be Doctor Orwell's.

"None that is of any conſequence," ſaid Henry, approaching the carriage.

'It is Doctor Sydney!' cried Harriet.

"Doctor Sydney!" repeated her father; "I hope no diſaſter—"

'A ſlight accident only,' ſaid Henry: 'which I ſhall inform you of at leiſure, if you will have the goodneſs to make room for me.'

"Yes, ſurely!" ſaid they both at once. "Maria is behind," added the Doctor, "your appearance will alarm her, ſo pray ſtep in immediately."

Henry aſſented; and taking a haſty leave of the ſtranger, placed himſelf by the ſide of Harriet, whoſe emotion was too apparent to eſcape the penetrating eyes of love. In a voice expreſſive of the tendereſt ſolicitude, ſhe enquired into the nature

nature of the accident that had befallen him. Henry gave an evaſive anſwer to her interrogatories, and turned the converſation; which, in ſpite of the pain he ſuffered, he continued to ſupport with all that ſpirited animation the preſence of a beloved object naturally inſpires.

In the middle of a ſprightly ſally, he was ſtopped by a ſcream from Harriet. 'Ah! Sydney,' cried ſhe, 'you are wounded! you are deſperately wounded. My cloak is covered with blood.'

Henry, finding it was in vain any longer to attempt deceiving her, gave a faithful account of all that had happened; and was amply repaid for the anguiſh of his wound, by the intereſt Harriet evidently took in his misfortune.

On ſtopping at the door of Henry's lodgings, whither it had been agreed to drive, the ſtranger, whoſe raſhneſs had occaſioned the unlucky accident, preſented himſelf, and with him an eminent ſurgeon, with whom Sydney was well acquainted; and who was the very perſon he had thought of ſending for on the occaſion.

Such generous ardour to repair an injury he had unintentionally committed, excited the admiration of Sydney, who, in ſuitable terms, thanked him for his attention; and then proceeded with him and Doctor Orwell to his own apartment, to ſubmit the wound to the examination of the ſurgeon.

Harriet's heart ſunk within her, at the idea of the pain he muſt neceſſarily undergo; in vain did ſhe endeavour to exert her fortitude. When the carriage ſtopped in Hanover-ſquare, ſhe was too much agitated to alight. The ſecond chaiſe drove up, and Maria, Mr. Churchill, and Mrs. Botherim had deſcended from it and come up to her,

her, before she had sufficiently recollected her scattered spirits, to be able to form any excuse for her father's absence.

Alarmed at the appearance of her emotion, Maria earnestly entreated to know the cause; but without taking any notice of her questions, she hastily followed Mrs. Botherim into the house, where Mrs. Fielding received them with that happy mixture of cordiality and politeness which denotes the union of good-breeding and benevolence.

Henry's servant had communicated the news his master's misfortune at Mrs. Fielding's a few minutes before the arrival of his friends, and had thereby excited a degree of alarm and anxiety, which was still visible in that good lady's countenance. The similar feelings of Harriet did not escape her notice; and by exciting a degree of interest and compassion, gave a stronger impression in her favour than all the graces of her person, or beauty of her countenance, could have produced.

The shock which Maria received from the intelligence was sufficiently severe, though mitigated by the confidence she reposed in the veracity of her friends; which she knew to be of too genuine a nature to admit of their imposing upon her by any of those *kind lies*, which are often so liberally dispensed upon similar occasions. Doctor Orwell's report was extremely favourable. The ball, he told them, had been extracted without difficulty, and the wound, in the opinion of the surgeon, so little serious, that it would only occasion a few days confinement.

Maria's anxious desire to visit her brother was indulged by Mrs. Fielding, who kindly ordered her own chair to attend her. Mr. Churchill, as he

he handed her into it, whiſpered a wiſh that it had been a more ſociable conveyance; Maria did not frown, nor was ſhe, poſſibly, much diſpleaſed at ſeeing him walk beſide it to Henry's door.

While Maria and Churchill were on this charitable viſit, poor Mrs. Botherim was employed in giving Mrs. Fielding a circumſtantial detail of all ſhe had ſuffered from Bridgetina's abſence; interſperſed with many bitter reflections on the wicked people, and ſtill more wicked books, that had led her daughter aſtray. "Yes," cried ſhe, Ma'am, as I was telling you, I now knows for certain it is all along of them there people as comes to Mr. Glib's, who I thought, all the time, (GOD help me) to be the moſt learned and the moſt wiſeſt people in the world. It is true, I did not underſtand much of the meaning of what they ſaid; for what ſhould I know of perfebility, and cowſation, and all them there things? But had I known that they meant to make children unnatural, and undutiful to their parents, they ſhould never have been uttered in my houſe, I promiſe ye."

'It is, indeed, to be regretted,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding, 'that Miſs Botherim ſhould have been ſo unfortunate in the choice of her books and friends. It could not be expected from Miſs Botherim, that with her limited opportunities of information ſhe ſhould be able to detect the pernicious tendency of the opinions ſhe ſo unhappily embraced.'

"Ah! Madam," returned Mrs. Botherim, "you have no ſort of notion how learned ſhe was. I do aſſure you, ſhe has read as many books as e'er a parſon in the kingdom The hiſtories of lords and counts, and colonels and ladies of quality, was what ſhe pored on from morning

morning till night. And then she got them there Metam Physics in whole volumes, as big as the church bible; all written, as she told me, by that *General Utility*, as she called him. I'm sure I shall hate the name of him as long as I live."

Mrs. Fielding could not help smiling at the simplicity of this account. 'I am afraid, my good Madam,' said she, 'that the sort of reading you first alluded to, was a very bad preparative for the latter. To an imagination enflamed by an incessant perusal of the improbable fictions of romance, a flight into the regions of metaphysics must rather be a dangerous excursion. I am afraid Miss Botherim has gone too far astray in the fields of imagination to be easily brought back to the plain path of common sense.'

"I should hope," said Doctor Orwell, "that a little reflection would make her sensible of the fallacy of opinions, which have invariably proved fatal to all who have so far adopted, as to make them a principle of action."

'Yes, my dear Madam,' said Mrs. Botherim, 'do pray tell her of the consequences. Bid her think of poor Miss Delmond, who has been ruinated, and deluded, and ticed away by a fellow, who, for all his fine talk, is no better than a shabby hair-dresser. And—'

Here the entrance of Bridgetina, who had been sent for by Mrs. Fielding, put an end to the good lady's harangue. Her affection for her daughter so far outweighed her resentment, that the former only appeared in her reception. Throwing her arms round her neck, she exclaimed in broken accents, while tears flowed from her eyes, 'My Biddy! my dear Biddy! you will not leave your poor mother again? No, no, you cannot be so cruel. You shall do just whatever you

you pleaſe, and have the command of all I have in the world, if you will but ſtay with me to comfort my old age. I am ſure,' added ſhe, ſobbing, 'I am ſure I never contradicted you in my life—you cannot ſay that I did.'

"It would have been quite counter to the proper order of things, if you had," returned Bridgetina. "To a perfectible being every ſpecies of coercion is improper, and as contradiction is a ſpecies of coercion, it neceſſarily follows that—"

'There!' cried Mrs. Botherim, holding up her claſped hands in agony, 'there, now! ſhe is at it again! Juſt the old ſtory! all them there fine words over again, as pat as the day ſhe firſt learned them. O, Biddy! Biddy! would ye but ſpeak in a way that a body could underſtand!'

"If I were to ſpeak to your comprehenſion, mother," returned Bridgetina, "I muſt deſcend indeed! A mind that is illumined like mine——"

'Come, come, Miſs Botherim,' ſaid Doctor Orwell, 'don't think you will add to your dignity by leſſening your parent. I, for my ſhare, know no good of any illumination that does not ſhew itſelf in the conduct. And in that, my dear, your mother has the advantage of you; as ſhe has never been guilty of any glaring impropriety.'

"The perſon, ſir, who would energiſe in no vulgar manner muſt prepare herſelf for encountering obloquy and cenſure," retorted Bridgetina.

'And pray, my dear, what entitles you to be ſuperior to obloquy and cenſure? What right have you to think, that a line of conduct, condemned by the general ſuffrage of mankind, and which, if it were univerſally to prevail, would

prove deſtructive to the peace and happineſs of ſociety, ſhould eſcape reprehenſion?'

"'The prejudices which ſpring from the odious inſtitutions of an ill-conſtituted ſociety,' ſaid Bridgetina, 'ought to be deſpiſed by every perſon capable of ſoaring to a ſublime morality, founded on abſtract reaſoning.'

'And it is this ſublime morality, founded on abſtract reaſoning, which teaches you to neglect, or to deſpiſe, the performance of every duty belonging to your ſituation?' returned the Doctor. 'It is *it* which teaches you to forſake an indulgent parent, who has made your happineſs the ſtudy of her whole life; and in return for the tender care ſhe has beſtowed on your infancy and youth, to leave her old age to ſolitude and ſorrow. It is this ſublime morality, founded on abſtract reaſoning, which has likewiſe, I ſuppoſe, taught you to break through every law of delicacy and decorum, and ſhameleſsly to offer yourſelf to proſtitution? Such have been the fruits of this *ſublime morality*, which arrogantly pretends to excel that of the Goſpel!'

"'I have ſomewhere heard reaſoning termed *the arithmetic of words*,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding. 'Where the ſum total is ſo monſtrous, I think we may confidently pronounce that there has been ſome error in the calculation. Of this, I have no doubt, Miſs Botherim will become fully ſenſible, when ſhe takes a wide and impartial view of the conſequences.'

'Aye!' cried Mrs. Botherim, 'let her take a view of Mr. Glib's poor ragged children in the pariſh workhouſe, whom their father has left to ſtarve, becauſe, forſooth, a man ſhould have no regard for his own fleſh and blood! And let her ſee what is become of their mother—gone off, like

like a huſſey, with a recruiting officer! Pretty conſequences, truly! To ſay nothing of the death of that worthy gentleman, Captain Delmond, who died of a broken heart, if ever man did; and I am ſure I do not wonder at his doing ſo, for what touches the heart of a parent equal to the undutifulneſs of a darling child? Woe is me that I ſhould live to ſpeak this from experience! But, indeed, Biddy, I ſhall never recover your unkindneſs.'

Notwithſtanding the philoſophy of Bridgetina, ſhe could not help being affected by the tears of her mother. Mrs. Fielding, perceiving the impreſſion that they made upon her, thought it beſt to leave them ſome time to themſelves. She aroſe, and taking a hand of each, led them to the adjoining apartment, ſaying, "that after ſo long a ſeparation they had probably many things to communicate that would be beſt diſcuſſed in a *téte-a-téte.*"

The endeavours of Mrs. Fielding to reconcile our heroine to return to her mother were forcibly ſeconded by the mortifying circumſtances of her ſituation. Without money, without friends, without any remaining hopes of ſucceſs in the great object of her wiſhes, ſhe began to think that ſhe had rather been too precipitate in her anticipation of the practices of *The Age of Reaſon;* and that in the preſent deplorable ſtate of things, a young woman might be excuſable in remaining under the protection of her relations, though ſhe eſcaped the glory of moral martyrdom by doing ſo.

A thouſand times ſince ſhe left W—— had ſhe ſenſibly felt the want of thoſe little tender attentions, which her fond mother had ever been ſo ready to beſtow. She had been ſick—

and found no one intereſted in her recovery. Mrs. Benton had, indeed, attended her as much as her buſineſs would allow; but her attentions fell far ſhort of the anxious ſolicitude of a parent, who, on the ſlighteſt indiſpoſition, had been alarmed for her ſafety. Nor had ſhe been able to eradicate from her breaſt the feelings of filial affection; feelings, which the unexpected meeting with her mother had powerfully revived. And as ſhe had now little proſpect of ſoon ſeeing any of thoſe who were ſufficiently enlightened, to condemn her for this returning weakneſs, ſhe was eaſily prevailed upon to oblige the old lady, by conſenting to accompany her back to W——.

Overjoyed at this inſtance of condeſcenſion, Mrs. Botherim willingly undertook to diſcharge all the debts contracted by her daughter; and having gratefully thanked Mrs. Fielding for her kind attention, departed with Bridgetina to Mrs. Benton's.

CHAP. XV.

"Beware of Jealouſy!"

SHAKESPEARE.

MRS. Fielding's intention of ſending to enquire for Henry on the following morning was anticipated by Doctor Orwell, whoſe report was ſo favourable as to infuſe cheerfulneſs into the countenances of the circle, now aſſembled at breakfaſt.

In talking over the diſaſter of the preceding evening, Dr. Orwell mentioned the gentleman who had been the unfortunate occaſion of it, by the name of Carradine.

"Has

"Has he ever been in India," asked Mrs. Fielding, eagerly.

'I believe he has,' returned the Doctor.

"Then," said Mrs. Fielding, "I make no doubt he is the son of one of my oldest and most intimate friends. Through the interest of Lady Brierston I procured this boy a cadet's appointment on the Bengal establishment, about fourteen years ago; but of me, it is probable, he now retains not any remembrance."

Mrs. Fielding was mistaken. While she yet spoke, Mr. Carradine was announced. He had, through Henry Sydney, heard of her living in London, and no sooner heard it, than with all that ardour which was the prominent feature of his character, he hastened to pay his respects to his acknowledged benefactress. Mrs. Fielding received this testimony of his gratitude with a satisfaction equal to the interest she took in the welfare of the son of her friend. She heard with pleasure of his success in India, which had far exceeded his most sanguine expectations; and was still more highly gratified by learning, that that success had enabled him to make a handsome provision for two orphan sisters. He had come over to pay a visit to the eldest of these, upon her marriage, and his leave of absence being now nearly expired, was on the eve of again taking his departure for the East.

In speaking of the misfortune occasioned by his rashness the preceding evening, he expressed himself with so much feeling on account of Henry, and such a generous condemnation of his own impetuosity, as not only reconciled Mrs. Fielding, but even divested Maria of all inclination to impute to him the least degree of blame. Harriet was, on this occasion, somewhat behind her friends in point of generosity. As the per-

ſon by whom the life of Henry had been expoſed to danger, ſhe could not help viewing Mr. Carradine with a degree of diſlike; nor was her diſlike diminiſhed by finding herſelf the object of his particular attention. That ſhe was ſo, was evident almoſt from the very moment of his entrance; and the avidity with which he accepted Mrs. Fielding's invitation to dinner, might, perhaps, be as juſtly attributed to the power of attraction as to the impulſe of gratitude.

This young man, whoſe quick and lively feelings had, by early indulgence, been foſtered into uncontrolable impetuoſity, was the willing ſlave of impulſe; but though frequently led aſtray by his capricious guide, his errors were more than compenſated by the virtues of his heart. Open, generous, and ſincere, he was ſtill more fervent in his friendſhips than in his enmities; and equally prompt to confer an obligation, as to reſent an injury. The impreſſion made upon his mind by the firſt appearance of Miſs Orwell, was augmented into intoxication before the end of the evening; nor was this delirium of love in the leaſt checked by the apparent coldneſs of her manners. Little accuſtomed to intercourſe with the ſex, he was a ſtranger to that delicacy of ſentiment which renders an union of minds eſſential to happineſs; and having gathered from converſation in the courſe of the day, that Miſs Orwell's fortune conſiſted chiefly in her charms and virtues, he retired elate with hope, and fully confident of ſucceſs.

On the following morning he returned to eſcort the ladies to an exhibition of paintings, to which Mrs. Fielding had mentioned an intention of carrying her young friends on the preceding evening. Harrietwould willingly have been excuſed,

excuſed, but ſhe was ſuch a novice in the modern ſchool of female manners, that ſhe did not conſider herſelf at liberty to indulge every wayward humour, or to diſconcert the pleaſure of a party for the gratification of her own feelings. She therefore concealed her repugnance, and only begged Maria not to quit her ſide. Maria promiſed, and no doubt intended to comply with her requeſt; but Mr. Churchill knew ſo well the paintings that were particularly ſuited to her taſte, and took ſuch pains to point them out, that in the fervour of her admiration of the pieces to which he directed her attention, ſhe was inſenſibly drawn to another part of the room. Dr. Orwell and Mrs. Fielding were mean time engaged in converſation, ſo that Harriet found herſelf left to the care of Mr Carradine; who, without conſidering the character to whom he addreſſed himſelf, employed the opportunity thus afforded him to pour out that profuſion of exaggerated compliment, which he had been taught to conſider as the moſt acceptable offering to the ear of beauty.

Tired by his aſſiduity, and provoked by his perſeverance, ſhe haſtened to where Mrs. Fielding and her father had procured ſeats. Juſt as ſhe approached them, Dr. Orwell reſigned his to an elderly lady, whom he heard complain of fatigue. The ſame complaint was heard by ſeveral young men of faſhion, who lounged upon the ſame bench, but heard without producing on their part the ſmalleſt effort for her accommodation. The eyes of the ſame party were now turned on Harriet, who involuntarily ſhrunk from their familiar ſtare, and gladly entered into a converſation with Mrs. Fielding, in order to relieve her embarraſſment.

The converſation naturally turned on the

paintings, on which Harriet gave her opinion with all that ingenuouſneſs and ſimplicity which belonged to her character. Accuſtomed to think for herſelf, ſhe did not heſitate to ſpeak from her feelings; and as ſhe made no pretenſions to connoiſſeurſhip, would not have been at all mortified at finding that ſhe had been pleaſed with a piece that was not ſtamped with the approbation of a connoiſſeur.

"You ſeem fatigued, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Fielding; "I wiſh we could make room for you," looking at the gentlemen, who ſtill kept their ſeats.

'I beg the young lady may take mine;' ſaid the elderly lady whom Doctor Orwell had accommodated. Harriet declined the offer, and the ſubject of the paintings was renewed.

"I confeſs," ſaid Mrs. Fielding, "that I receive peculiar pleaſure from ſuch paintings as afford an exerciſe to the mind. I am not connoiſſeur enough to be long enraptured with all the charms of light and ſhade; and though I admire the beauty of that St. Cecilia, I dwell with much more ſatisfaction on its companion, which gives ſuch a lively repreſentation of the manners of a former age and diſtant country."

'Taſteleſs muſt they be, who can turn their eyes to painted canvaſs, while animated beauty demands their admiration!' whiſpered Carradine.

"You are right," ſaid Dr. Orwell to Mrs. Fielding; "and that view of the ſavages, which hangs oppoſite to us, has afforded me particular pleaſure, from the train of ideas it has excited. No one can view it, and look around, without being convinced how nearly the extremes of barbariſm and civilization are united. Do but mark the expreſſion of ſtupidity and indolence in the counte-

countenance of that ſavage who ſits at the door of the hut. Methinks he wants but a tooth-pick to make him quite a modern fine gentleman; he ſeems almoſt as much inſenſible to all the moral, natural, and ſocial feelings and enjoyments, as any beau in the room. See with what liſtleſs indifference his companion views the females who are placed beſide him. How vacant his ſtare! How rude and brutiſh does it ſpeak his manners!"

While Dr. Orwell was ſpeaking, Mrs. Fielding accidentally turned her eye from the picture upon the gentlemen who ſat beſide her. 'An't you tired of this horrid place?' ſaid one.

"Tired!" returned his companion; "I have been fatigued to death this half-hour." So ſaying, they roſe with one conſent, perhaps determined never more to take their place at an exhibition beſide a portrait of ſavages.

On their return home, Mrs. Fielding ſtopped the carriage at Henry's door. While Doctor Orwell and Maria were ſtepping out to enquire for him, 'Tell him,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding, 'that we ſhall all pay him a viſit together, the firſt evening he is well enough to receive us. Maria ſoon returned, with earneſt intreaties from her brother that the kind promiſe might be fulfilled that very evening. The requeſt was ſeconded by Dr. Orwell, on whoſe judgment Mrs. Fielding ſo much relied, that ſhe was eaſily prevailed upon to acquieſce in the propoſal.

In the evening they accordingly went, and were received by Henry with the moſt rapturous gratitude. To Mrs. Fielding he was profuſe in his acknowledgments, for her goodneſs and condeſcenſion. To Harriet his eyes only ſpoke, but they required not any interpreter. In anſwer to the interrogatories concerning his wound, he

declared it to be a mere ſcratch, not worth mentioning; and only that it obliged him to keep on his night-gown, would not confine him to his room another day. While Mrs. Fielding was congratulating him on the fortunate iſſue of an event which had appeared ſo big with danger, and Harriet ſmiling delight at the certainty of his recovery, Mr. Carradine entered the room. He inſtantly ſeized the vacant chair by the ſide of Harriet, and to her ſo excluſively devoted his attentions, that he did not ſeem to have either eyes or ears for any other object. Unaccuſtomed to diſguiſe his feelings, he ſought not to conceal them; tho' the evident diſtreſs of Harriet might have convinced him, that whatever gratification he enjoyed from this open avowal of his partiality, he enjoyed at her expence. In vain did ſhe endeavour by monoſyllable anſwers to weary out his patience, or by frequently addreſſing Mrs. Fielding or Maria, to turn his attention to the converſation of her friends. He could ſpeak but to her alone, and made ſuch frequent alluſions to what paſſed either in the courſe of the morning, or during his viſit to Mrs. Fielding on the preceding day, as muſt have impreſſed any liſtener with an idea of their being on terms of long-eſtabliſhed intimacy.

Trifling was the pain of the wound his hand had given, in compariſon of that which his conduct now inflicted on the heart of Henry. He now firſt felt the torturing pang of jealouſy, nor did the behaviour of Harriet quiet his apprehenſions. He knew her delicacy, he knew her prudence; and to prudence and delicacy did he ſolely attribute her ſeeming indifference to the too evident partiality of her new admirer. But would ſhe continue indifferent to a man, who, emboldened by

by prosperity, addressed her in the stile of confident success? Would she scorn the allurements of ambition, and refuse the offer of affluence from one whose personal accomplishments alone might make an impression on any female heart? "She will," said Hope. 'No, no;' said trembling Apprehension, 'you have no right to expect it. "Then she is lost to you for ever!" said Despondency.

The pale hue that succeeded the feverish flush on the cheek of Henry, was not unobserved by Mrs. Fielding. "Sydney," said she, "I fear you have over-rated the progress of your recovery. Your wish to see your friends has led you to an exertion beyond your strength; but we must be no longer parties in your indiscretion." She then ordered her carriage, and while Henry endeavoured to assure her that her fears were without foundation, she was, by the changes of his colour, and the faltering of his voice, fully persuaded of their reality.

When Doctor Orwell went to enquire for his young friend on the following morning, he met the surgeon coming out of his apartment, and from him (to his great disquietude) received intelligence of Henry's increased indisposition. A considerable degree of fever had already taken place, which in the course of the day became so alarming, that the surgeon on his next visit in the afternoon proposed calling in the assistance of an eminent physician. Next day he was still worse, and Maria, in anguish of heart, dispatched a messenger to her father with the melancholy tidings.

All the bright visions of expected happiness, with which Maria and her friend had indulged their imaginations while preparing for their jaunt

to

to London, were now completely annihilated; and in their place melancholy reflections on the paſt, or gloomy forebodings of the future, took poſſeſſion of their minds. From the preſſure of theſe Maria was ſomewhat relieved by active exertion; but Harriet had no ſuch reſource. She had not even the privilege of communicating the ſufferings of her anxious heart. They did not, however, eſcape the penetrating eye of Mrs Fielding, who, by the moſt ſoothing attention, endeavoured to alleviate as much as poſſible the pain ſhe well knew how to eſtimate.

A ſtill ſeverer taſk awaited her—it was the reception of Mr. Sydney; who inſtantly on the receipt of his daughter's letter had ſet off for London, and arrived on the day that Henry was pronounced to be in the utmoſt danger.

Though a period of thirty years had elapſed ſince Mrs. Fielding had laſt ſeen Mr. Sydney, it is probable that time had not ſo completely obliterated the remembrance of their parting ſcene, that ſhe could now, without emotion, have gone through the ceremony of the firſt interview, had not every feeling been abſorbed by the object of their mutual anxiety. The ſame cauſe would have been productive of the ſame effects at any period of their acquaintance; for in ſpite of the ſupreme dominion aſcribed by poets and novelifts to the God of Love, (who is repreſented as the prime mover of every human action, and the omnipotent governor of the breaſt of every perſon who has ever felt his power) he is, in fact, a mere ſunſhine viſitor, who ſkulks away at the firſt appearance of calamity, and is driven from the heart at the approach of real evil.

Mrs. Fielding, who felt for Henry all the affection of a parent—feelingly participated in the parent's

parent's affliction. For ſome days after the arrival of Mr. Sydney, fearful ſuſpence continued to reſt on every brow, and to throb in every heart. Harriet to whom the preſence of Carradine had been ſo diſagreeable, now watched for his knock at the door with ſickening impatience; he, indeed, ſpent the greateſt part of his time in going betwixt Hanover-ſquare and George-ſtreet; and by the lively intereſt he took in Henry's recovery, raiſed himſelf not a little in the opinion of his miſtreſs.

Above a week was thus ſpent. At the end of that period a change took place, which his medical friends pronounced to be a favourable criſis. Harriet was ſitting with Mrs. Fielding in her dreſſing-room, the door of which had been left open, to facilitate the communication of intelligence. Twice had ſhe gone to it on tip-toe, on hearing two ſeveral knocks at the hall-door, but was each time diſappointed by the appearance of viſiting-tickets in the ſervant's hands.

While he was delivering the laſt of theſe to Mrs. Fielding, Carradine ruſhed in.—"He is out of danger!" cried he; "the phyſicians declare he is out of danger! But Miſs Orwell, why do you not ſpeak? You are not ſorry, ſure, to hear that Sydney is out of danger? why do you not rejoice?"

'I—I do rejoice!' ſaid Harriet, and burſt into a violent flood of tears.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Carradine, "I thought it would have made you happy to hear the poor fellow was out of danger; but had I known how differently it was to affect you, I would ſooner have been ſhot from the mouth of a cannon than have told you a word of the matter."

'Good as well as bad news may be declared too abruptly,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding. Then, in order

der to divert his attention from Harriet, ſhe proceeded to aſk a number of queſtions concerning the opinion of the phyſicians, and the ſymptoms on which that opinion was founded. Mr. Carradine was but ill qualified to give her information concerning theſe particulars; but the ſimple fact that Henry was pronounced out of danger, was a ſolace to her friendly heart.

CHAP. XVI.

"Reader, attend: Whether thy ſoul
"Soars Fancy's flights beyond the pole,
"Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
"In low purſuit;
"Know prudent, cautious, ſelf-control,
"Is Wiſdom's root."

BURNS.

THE recovery of Henry was not rapid, but it was unattended by any relapſe. No ſooner did returning health begin to re-brace the unſtrung nerves, and re-invigorate the feeble frame, than the mind reverted to the objects of its former intereſt; and though (contrary to the uſual practice of lovers in ſimilar circumſtances) he had not during his delirium once mentioned the name of Harriet, her image now reaſſumed its wonted place in his breaſt.

"Maria," ſaid he one day to his ſiſter, as ſhe ſet by his bedſide, which he was yet too feeble to leave for more than half an hour at a time, "you confine yourſelf too much to my apartment. Beſides the riſk of injuring your health, you muſt embitter the happineſs of Miſs Orwell by thus perpetually depriving her of your ſociety. But, perhaps, ſhe ſees enough of company at Mrs.

Mrs. Fielding's to ſolace her for the abſence of her old friends?"

'No, indeed,' returned Maria, 'Mrs. Fielding has received no viſitors ſince you were taken ill; I do not believe that any ſtranger, except Mr. Carradine, has been within her door.'

"And has Mr. Carradine been often there?"

'O yes, two or three times at leaſt every day.'

"He is, then, quite on a familiar footing in Hanover-ſquare?" ſaid Henry, in a tremulous voice.

'Entirely ſo,' returned Maria. 'He goes in and out juſt like one of the family. Indeed, I believe the intereſt he took in your recovery, and the ſenſibility he evinced the time you were thought to be in danger, has more endeared him to Mrs. Fielding than if he had been the ſon of twenty friends. That deep ſigh tells me, that I muſt not yet indulge you in talking; but if you pleaſe I ſhall now read to you a little—'

"I think I had rather ſleep," ſaid Henry. Maria drew the curtain, and remained in ſilence.

The convaleſcence of Henry was no ſooner aſcertained, than Doctor Orwell began to think of returning home. And no ſooner did Carradine hear of his intention, than he haſtened to communicate to him ſuch propoſals concerning his daughter as he was well aſſured could not fail to meet his approbation. Having entered the Doctor's dreſſing-room in a manner ſufficiently abrupt to have created ſome alarm in a perſon of weak nerves, he thus opened the conference. 'Doctor Orwell, your daughter is a charming girl! by my ſoul, I do not believe there is ſuch a lovely girl in England!'

"You do my daughter great honour, ſir," ſaid the Doctor, ſmiling at his odd manner of expreſſing a truth which he himſelf had, however.

ever, no difficulty in believing. Harriet is ſurely much obliged to you for the compliment."

'Not at all,' returned Carradine, 'not obliged to me at all. I would not love her if I could help it, but I cannot help it; and I do love her with all my heart. Ten thouſand pounds is what I mean to ſettle on her. Tell me, if that will anſwer your expectations?"

"Really, ſir, I do not well underſtand you. Your propoſal is made in a manner ſo abrupt, and was ſo truly unexpected, that you muſt forgive me if I cannot give it an immediate anſwer."

'Nothing can be plainer than my propoſal,' rejoined Carradine. 'I love your daughter, and will marry her without a ſhilling, making her a ſettlement of ten thouſand pounds, which ſhall be entirely at her own diſpoſal.'

"And is it with Harriet's knowledge that you now apply to me on this buſineſs?"

'No, Miſs Orwell, notwithſtanding we have now been acquainted for almoſt a fortnight, has never yet given me an opportunity of talking to her on the ſubject.'

"And do you really think, that on a fortnight's acquaintance the character of any perſon can be ſufficiently developed, to warrant entering with them into a connection that is indiſſoluble?"

A fortnight! Why I have known many very happy marriages take place in Bengal upon an acquaintance of leſs than half the time. I remember the time, when every freſh cargo of imported beauties uſed to go off as faſt as they were ſeen. Now, to be ſure, the market is rather overſtocked; and many a fine girl remains on hands for the length of a whole ſeaſon. But as to making up one's mind upon the buſineſs, that can be done in half an hour as well as in half a century.'

"You

"You aſtoniſh me!" cried Dr. Orwell, "I have indeed heard of young women's going out to India with a view, no doubt, to get eſtabliſhed in marriage. But that whole cargoes ſhould go out in that manner, as to a regular market, I really ſhould not, but from good authority, have credited. Surely they can only be ſome poor, unfortunate, and friendleſs girls, who have neither parents nor protectors at home, that are driven to ſuch deſperate methods of obtaining a proviſion?"

'Pardon me,' replied Carradine, 'the greateſt number who now come out are ſent by their parents and protectors; and, in general, the ſpeculation is not a bad one.

"Is it poſſible," cried Doctor Orwell, "that any parent ſhould be ſo depraved, as to expoſe his child to a ſituation ſo humiliating! How loſt to all that conſcious dignity which enhances every female charm; how loſt to every ſentiment of delicacy muſt ſhe become, who is thus led to make a barter of herſelf! My mind revolts at the idea!"

'Does the diſtance of the market, then, make ſuch a mighty difference?' ſaid Carradine. 'Really, my dear ſir, that is an objection merely imaginary. The voyage is a trifle; and as to the conſcious dignity, and all that, I do aſſure you, that ſo far from its being loſt by going to India, I have there ſeen many a girl who, at an Engliſh watering-place, would have been glad to flirt with an enſign, get ſo proud and ſaucy in the ſpace of a few weeks, that ſhe would not deign to ſpeak to a ſubaltern! The reaſon is plain—In India the number of European ladies is ſtill ſo ſmall, in proportion to the gentlemen, that they are *there* of ſome conſequence. But here they are hawked about in ſuch quantities at every

place

place of public refort, that if the poor things did not lay themſelves out to court attention, they would have no chance of being taken notice of.'

"Better remain unnoticed for ever, than be ſo degraded!" ſaid Doctor Orwell, with vehemence. "For my part," continued he, "though the increaſing prevalence of luxury and falſe pride, and falſe notions of true dignity, tend to render poverty an evil of mighty magnitude to a helpleſs female, I had rather ſee my daughters reduced to the neceſſity of earning their bread, than behold them raiſed to the higheſt pinnacle of fortune by ſuch methods as you have deſcribed."

'*Your daughter!* my dear ſir. Oh, ſhe is a being of a ſuperior order. Tell me but that you conſent ſhe ſhall be mine, and by all that's ſacred ſhe ſhall be as happy a woman—aye, and truſt me, as much reſpected as the wife of any man in Europe.'

"I muſt repeat it again," replied the Doctor, "that I am no friend to haſty connexions. We are frequently taught by experience, that where the general character is on both ſides good, an unconformity of temper, or diſſimilarity of taſte, is ſufficient to embitter the tenor of exiſtence. And how on a ſhort acquaintance can we form that knowledge of the diſpoſition which prudence requires, in order to give a chance for happineſs?"

'As to temper, I do aſſure you no one ever found fault with mine. Let Miſs Orwell enquire of my friends, and they will tell her that I am the beſt-natured fellow in the world. A little haſty, or ſo, perhaps, but then it is over in a moment; and I vow to God I never ſhall be in a paſſion with her. How could I, with ſuch an angel! Believe me, ſir, we ſhall be one of the happieſt couples in the world.'

Doctor

Doctor Orwell ſmiled. "Well, but Mr. Carradine, if you had my conſent, pray have you any reaſon to conclude that Harriet's is certain?"

'No, I really cannot ſay that I am ſure of that. But when ſhe knows how good a huſband I ſhall make, and ſees that you are very much inclined to the match, I do not deſpair of prevailing on her to make me happy. She is ſo ſweet, and ſo compaſſionate, that I do not think ſhe could have the cruelty to inflict miſery upon any mortal. I never ſaw any creature poſſeſſed of a heart ſo tender! Why ſhe could not even hear mention made of what poor Sydney ſuffered, without always changing colour; and I have more than once obſerved the ſilent tear ſteal ſoftly down her cheek, even while a ſmile ſat upon her countenance. And what is the anguiſh of a thouſand fevers, in compariſon of what I ſhould feel in loſing her?'

"I hope, that if my daughter ſhould be ſo cruel," ſaid Doctor Orwell, "there is little reaſon to apprehend any *danger* from the misfortune; and that in the ſmiles of ſome other beauty all your wounds will ſoon be healed."

'I ſhall never ſpeak to another beauty in my life;' replied Carradine, warmly. 'I ſhall embark for India in the firſt ſhip; and do you think, that after having contemplated the unaffected lovelineſs of Miſs Orwell, endeared by ſweetneſs, and exalted by the utmoſt refinement of ſentiment and gracefulneſs of manners, I ſhall have any taſte for the inſipid morſels of foil and froth that I am there likely to meet with? No, no; if I return to India without a wife, I ſhall go back to poor Mirza; tho' beſides the burthen of ſo many dingy brats, there is plaguy little comfort in a connection that affords neither friendſhip nor ſociety.'

Here

Here the converſation was interrupted by the ſudden entrance of Mrs. Botherim, who, with a heavy heart, came to complain to Doctor Orwell of the untoward diſpoſition of her daughter. As many years had elapſed ſince the good lady had viſited London, ſhe had thought it proper to take the preſent opportunity of renewing her acquaintance with the few friends of her childhood who were ſtill in exiſtence; and had accepted an invitation to take up her reſidence, while ſhe remained in town, at the houſe of a relation, for whoſe family ſhe anxiouſly wiſhed her daughter to cultivate an affection. It was of her behaviour to theſe friends that ſhe now came to complain, which ſhe did with great bitterneſs; and concluded with intreating Doctor Orwell to viſit them, and point out to Bridgetina the impropriety of her behaviour towards people whoſe character ſhe repreſented as extremely amiable, and whoſe conduct had in ſome reſpects been highly meritorious. The Doctor readily promiſed compliance with her requeſt, and as ſoon as ſhe departed, haſtened to Harriet's apartment, to talk to her about the propoſals of Carradine.

The ſubject did not bear much diſcuſſion. It was decided by Harriet in a moment. Her objections were pointed out with ſo much judgment, and ſupported with ſo much firmneſs, as left no room to expect a change of ſentiment.

"Well, my dear," ſaid the Doctor, "I cannot ſay that I am ſorry for your refuſal of this young man; particularly, as I do not believe your refuſal of him proceeds from any romantic notions of getting a more advantageous propoſal hereafter. If I conſidered marriage as abſolutely neceſſary to your happineſs, I ſhould regret your loſing ſuch an opportunity of eſtabliſhing yourſelf; for with a fortune that will be no

more

more than adequate to your ſupport in a very retired ſituation, ſmall will be your chance of any other offer. But your mind has, I truſt, too much of the dignity of independence, to be abſolutely at the mercy of extrinſic circumſtances for happineſs,"

While Doctor Orwell was thus converſing with his daughter, her impatient lover who had left the room on Mrs. Botherim's entrance, in hopes of finding his adorable alone in the drawing-room, went immediately thither in ſearch of her. No one was there but Mrs. Fielding; and Carradine, who had at that time little reliſh for her ſociety, very ſpeedily put an end to his viſit.

His impatience to know how Harriet would receive his propoſals, was quite inſupportable. Still hope predominated; and with ſpirits highly exhilarated, notwithſtanding their agitation, he ſuddenly darted into Henry's apartment, who was ſitting penſive and alone over the dying embers of his fire, the decline of which had entirely eſcaped his obſervation.

"What! moping all alone?" cried Carradine, on entering. "Have you had no viſit from your ſiſter to-day?"

'No, indeed, returned Henry; 'ſhe I believe, is aſſiſting Miſs Orwell in making ſome preparations for this ball, to which they have been invited. You, I ſuppoſe, mean to accompany them?'

"Me! oh, without doubt. I would accompany Miſs Orwell to the end of the world! Is ſhe not a charming creature? Tell me now, Sydney, did you ever ſee a more lovely girl? Don't you think a man might fancy himſelf in paradiſe with ſuch an angel? Oh! if ſhe be ever mine!"

'Your's!' exclaimed Henry, in a voice which his parched tongue could ſcarcely render audible.

"Yes, mine!" gaily anſwered his happy rival.

Perhaps

Perhaps to-day—perhaps in an hour—in leſs than an hour, I may hear from her ſweet lips, that I am the happieſt fellow in Chriſtendom! Zounds, Sydney, you have no notion what a happy fellow I ſhall be!"

The elder Mr. Sydney then coming in excuſed Henry from making any reply. Carradine aſked him, whether he had been at Mrs. Fielding's? To which the old gentleman returned for anſwer, that he had called there to ſpeak with Doctor Orwell, but found him engaged in his daughter's apartment; and as he thought they might be conſulting about ſome family buſineſs, he did not interrupt their *tête à tête*.

"Fine old fellow!" cried Carradine. "I ſee he did not loſe a moment. But the conference muſt be over by this time. I fly to know my fate. Good morning." Graſping Henry's hand, which he ſqueezed with great violence, "Dear Sydney, wiſh me ſucceſs!" and then, without making any obſervation on the altered countenance of Sydney, or imagining him in the leaſt intereſted in the ſubject, he precipitately left the room.

No ſooner was Sydney alone with his father, than the latter, obſerving his unuſual gravity, and anxious to amuſe him in the beſt manner poſſible, began to enter into a minute deſcription of a cabinet of natural hiſtory, which he had that morning had the pleaſure of examining. In vain did he give a detail of all the wonders it contained; in vain did he deſcribe, with the moſt minute exactneſs, the diſcriminating marks that diſtinguiſhed the peculiar genus of every butterfly and every beetle. The delight he had received, he did not find it in his power to communicate; and he ſaw with regret, that the mind of Henry had not ſufficiently recovered its tone to enter with

with avidity into this favourite ſubject. So fully was the old gentleman occupied in his deſcription, that it was a conſiderable time before he obſerved the diſtracted and abſent air of his ſon.

At length, having for ſome moments fixed his eyes on Henry's face, "Henry," ſaid he, in a voice full of paternal tenderneſs, "what is the matter with thee, my ſon? I plainly perceive that ſomething has perturbed thy mind. But am I not worthy of thy confidence?"

'You are, you are, ſir,' replied Henry, 'moſt truly worthy of it; but my mind is at preſent in ſuch a diſtracted ſtate that I can ſcarcely make you comprehend my feelings—this fellow—this Carradine has undone me!'

"Carradine! did you ſay Carradine? And do you then apprehend any further bad conſequences from the wound? If ſo, let me go inſtantly for the ſurgeon. Not a moment ſhall be loſt. I——"

'Stop, my dear father,' cried Henry, 'Carradine has indeed inflicted a wound that is incurable; but it is beyond the ſurgeon's reach. He has torn my heart, and deprived my life of every hope that was dear to it. Oh! look not on me with contempt, accuſe me not of folly, when I tell you, that in Harriet Orwell I had treaſured up the happineſs of my exiſtence!'

"And has Miſs Orwell deceived you? Has ſhe ſcorned your poverty, and forſaken you for a wealthier lover? If ſo—ſhe is unworthy of my ſon; ſhe never deſerved to ſhare a heart like thine."

Though the feelings of Henry would have made his heart believe that Harriet did him injuſtice, reaſon told him ſhe was blameleſs; and love and honour equally impelled him to exculpate her from the charge. He, therefore, with great eagerneſs

gerneſs proceeded to vindicate the conduct of Harriet, and to attribute to his own want of merit, and deficiency in addreſs, the diſappointment that now overwhelmed him. To his father he freely opened his whole heart, and found from his ſoothing and tender ſympathy all the conſolation of which he was at preſent ſuſceptible.

From the mutual confidence eſtabliſhed in the family of the Sydneys, it was rather ſurpriſing that a ſubject, which had ſo long engroſſed his mind, ſhould not ſooner have been communicated. His naturally open and generous temper was formed for confidential intercourſe with kindred minds. He was equally a ſtranger to the coldneſs of reſerve, and the pride of concealment. Whenever he could give pleaſure, or even afford amuſement by what he communicated, he did it with a frankneſs at once ſo natural, and ſo engaging, that it endeared him to every heart. It was of ſelfiſh cares and ſelfiſh ſorrows that he was alone a churl. Theſe, which are by moſt young gentlemen deemed the only ſubject of family confidence, Henry often devoured in ſecret, or carefully concealed in the receſſes of his own boſom. The knowledge of his attachment to Harriet would, he knew, create anxiety in the affectionate hearts of his father and ſiſter, to whom his happineſs was too dear to render the completion of his wiſhes an object of indifference. Now that anxiety was loſt in deſpair, he did not ſullenly refuſe the conſolations of ſympathy, but happy in being now able to ſpeak to his beſt friend without reſerve on a ſubject that occupied his whole ſoul, he willingly conceded to his propoſal of ſending an apology to Mrs. Fielding's, that he might have his company for the reſt of the evening.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

" Truth weeping tells the mournful tale,
" How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her ſide,
" The paraſite empoiſoning her ear,
" With all the ſervile wretches in the rear,
" Looks o'er proud property extended wide,
" And eyes the ſimple ruſtic mind;
" Whoſe toil upholds the glittering ſhow—
" A creature of *another kind*,
" Some coarſer ſubſtance, unrefin'd,
" *Placed for her lordly uſe, thus far, thus vile below!*"

BURNS.

FEARFUL of meeting with Carradine, and anxious to avoid an interview that muſt have been mutually embarraſſing, Harriet Orwell propoſed accompanying her father on an immediate viſit to Miſs Botherim; and underſtanding that Mrs. Botherim intended calling at their late lodgings, ſhe haſtened thither in hopes of finding her, while her father wrote a few lines to Carradine, intimating her determined rejection of his ſuit. Doctor Orwell then ſtepped into the carriage which waited for him, and taking up his daughter and Mrs. Botherim at Mrs. Benton's, proceeded with them to the city.

No ſooner were they ſeated in the carriage, than the old lady renewed her lamentations concerning Bridgetina's conduct. "See," ſaid ſhe, preſenting Mrs. Benton's bill to Doctor Orwell, "ſee what a ſum I have juſt now paid for her. But this is nothing! Oh, juſt nothing at all, in compariſon to the diſgrace of pawning her watch! Oh, think of that, Doctor Orwell! Think of that! The very watch that had coſt me ſo

many tears to coax from my father on my marriage. Not that I should have cared a pin about it, but that the Miss Pickles never let alone telling me of the fine things our neighbour, Miss Dough, the biscuit-maker's daughter, had got upon her wedding. And my poor dear father, who did not like to see me fret, resolved that I should be as fine as the best of 'em! Little did he think that it was ever to come to a pawnbroker's shop!—"

Here the poor lady gave way to a burst of sorrow and indignation, which her companions did all in their power to pacify. After it had somewhat subsided, she thus proceeded: "Nothing could be kinder than our reception from our poor cousin Biggs's; for though they have had a hard struggle with the world, and gone down in fortune, their hearts are as warm and as good as ever. I hoped that Biddy would have taken to them, and that she would ha' been the better of seeing what some folks have to do to get through life; but, alas! they are not book-learned enough for her. And she looks so down upon them that you can't think. But how (says I) should they have found time for study? Cousin Peggy, who is the eldest, was but eighteen years of age when her father died. In half a year after his death their house was burnt to the ground, and in making their escape from a two-pair of stair window, their mother's back was broke, so that she has been bed-ridden ever since; and their brother, then a fine promising lad of fourteen, received a hurt upon his head, which reduced him to the condition you now see. The poor lad is quite an idiot, and the most melancholiest object in this world. Think, Biddy, (says I) think what a charge this was to the poor girls! And do but see how they have fulfilled it. Finding

ing what they had left of the wreck of their father's fortune insufficient for their maintenance, they set up a tea-shop; and as they were well beloved by all the neighbourhood, and every one pitied their misfortunes, they succeeded wonderfully. But what betwixt their attendance on their mother, and on their business, their time to be sure has been too fully occupied to have any leisure for your abstract reasoning, as you call it. They cannot talk about *duties*, I must own, as fine as you do; for how should they, when their whole lives have been employed in performing them?

"Alas, sir, I might as well talk to the stone wall. Biddy just minded me no more than nothing; and when I would make any remark on the kindness with which they treated their poor brother, whom they even seem to love the better for the misfortune that deprived him of the notice of every one besides, or on their attention to their poor miserable parent, who has been so many years a burthen to them, she stops my mouth by asking what all this has to do with *General Utility?* Poor thing! I am sure it was a bad day for her that ever she heard his name; so it was!—"

The carriage now drew up at Mrs. Bigg's door; and while Doctor and Miss Orwell waited in the shop, through which lay the only entrance to the apartments, Mrs. Botherim went up to prepare Bridgetina for their reception. The mind of Harriet had been so early and so deeply embued with a respect for virtue, that she could not divest herself of a degree of reverence in approaching Miss Biggs, such as no external circumstance of rank or splendour could have excited. She willingly accepted of a seat by her,

and entered into converſation with a cheerfulneſs and unaffected humility, very different from that ſpecies of condeſcenſion which certain people ſo kindly aſſume, when addreſſing themſelves to thoſe whoſe ſituation is in any reſpect inferior to their own. Their converſation was ſoon interrupted by the entrance of ſome ladies, who iſſued from a ſplendid carriage. Harriet retired to make way for them, while Miſs Biggs ſtood to receive their orders. To her, however, they were in no haſte to ſpeak, but continued their converſation to each other, without deigning to obſerve her.

At length, one of the ladies, ſeeming to recollect herſelf, exclaimed, "La! what a ſhocking place! I vow I cannot breathe in it a moment longer. I beg, young woman, you would make haſte."

Miſs Biggs modeſtly requeſted to know with what article ſhe would be ſerved?

"Did not I tell you it was Indian toys?" returned the lady; then addreſſing herſelf to one of her companions, "I declare, theſe people in the city are ſo ſtupid, it is quite a bore!"

The counter was by this time covered with various articles of japan, mother-of-pearl, &c. which the ladies examined and cheapened, making ſuch remarks on the replies given to their queſtions, as plainly charged the dealer with want of truth and common honeſty. At length, after they had ſufficiently amuſed themſelves with looking over the things, and were about to depart, the lady firſt-mentioned happened to lift her veil, and diſcovered to Doctor Orwell the face of Mrs. General Villers. She either did not ſee, or pretended not to ſee, the Doctor; and he, on his part, was by the ſcene that had

juſt

juſt occurred, inſpired with ſuch a ſovereign contempt for the actors, that he felt no wiſh to recognize any of them as an acquaintance. When they were gone, he aſked Miſs Biggs if they had really made no purchaſe.

"No, ſir," returned Miſs Biggs, "nor had they the leaſt intention to make any. It is what we often meet with."

'But I hope,' rejoined Doctor Orwell, 'you do not often meet with ſuch unprovoked rudeneſs, ſuch unfeeling inſolence?'

"Oh, yes, ſir;" ſaid Miſs Biggs, ſmiling, "people of faſhion reſerve all their good-breeding for their equals; they never conſider their inferiors as entitled to the ſmalleſt ſhare."

'Then,' ſaid Doctor Orwell, 'people of faſhion know not what true good-breeding is. A conſideration for the feelings of thoſe with whom we converſe, and a quick perception of what thoſe feelings are, is true politeneſs; and thoſe who have it not, whatever be their rank, are *vulgar*.'

"I am afraid, ſir," ſaid Miſs Biggs, "that your definition of politeneſs is not taught at any modern ſchool. At leaſt, if I am to judge from what has fallen under my own obſervation, I ſhould imagine that a conſideration for the feelings of inferiors in any ſituation is thought not only unneceſſary, but abſurd."

'I am ſorry to hear you ſay ſo,' ſaid Harriet, 'as you have ſuch an opportunity for making obſervations upon character, that I cannot doubt the juſtice of your remarks.'

"Yes, Madam," replied Miſs Biggs, "we have indeed an opportunity of obſerving an infinite variety in the tempers and diſpoſitions of thoſe who to their equals appear uniformly ami-

able. In the common intercourse of civilities little of the real character appears; but if one would know the world, it is necessary to be dependent."

'Ah!' returned Harriet, 'would the gay and the giddy but bear in their recollection, how often they may be looking down upon their superiors in all that is truly estimable, in all that will one day appear so even to themselves, it would check the insolence of pride, and lower the arrogance of presumption.'

Mrs. Botherim, who had been all this time assisting Bridgetina to dress, now came to lead Doctor and Miss Orwell to the dining-room. Bridgetina received them coldly, and before they had time to enter into any conversation with her, the poor lad, of whose unhappy situation Mrs. Botherim had informed them, ran into the room. Harriet was shocked at his appearance, but would not suffer disgust to enter her bosom at the sight of misfortune incident to humanity. He quickly approached her, and seized the large sun-fan which she held in her hand. Instantly conquering the involuntary flutter which his sudden motion had occasioned, she spoke to him with great gentleness, offering to teach him how to open and shut it. He seemed sensible of her indulgence, and after playing with it for some time, restored it with an appearance of great satisfaction. His youngest sister then came in, and made many apologies for his intrusion. She desired him (not in the tone of authority, but with the voice of affection) to go with her to their mother's apartment, who was then getting her dinner; and at length, by the promise of some sweetmeats which she shewed him, prevailed on him to leave the room.

"How

"How amiable," said Harriet, "how respectable is the conduct of these young women! I shall ever esteem myself obliged to Mrs. Botherim for introducing me to their acquaintance."

'And pray,' cried Bridgetina, 'what is the worth about which you make such a mighty rout? Is not knowledge essential to virtue? And what knowledge have they to boast of?'

"That knowledge," said Dr. Orwell, "without which all other knowledge is an empty boast —*the knowledge of their duty*. The knowledge which leads not to this one point, is, to the individual who possesses it, futile and nugatory."

'And pray,' retorted Bridgetina, 'how is society benefited by the sort of knowledge you talk of? What is the knowledge good for, that only benefits the individual?'

"Surely," replied Dr. Orwell, "you cannot ask that question seriously! The mere knowledge of our duty is, I grant you, of little consequence, if it does not lead to the practice of it; but when, as in the present instance, it eminently does so, who can say how far the benefit may extend? The active virtue of these young women, their filial piety, their sisterly affection, their kind and humane attention to their unfortunate brother, and the many self-denials they must have undergone in the performance of these duties, added to the conspicuous exertions they have made to enable them to perform them, is such an example of virtue as is not to be contemplated without bettering the heart. Believe me, Miss Botherim, one such example speaks more home to the feelings, and is of greater consequence to society, than volumes of philosophy."

'I trust,' said Harriet, 'the impression it

has made on my heart ſhall never be obliterated.'

"Nor do I make any doubt," continued Dr. Orwell, "that many have viewed it with feelings of a ſimilar nature. Who knows how often the example of theſe young women may have ſilenced the murmurs of diſcontent? how often it may have produced reflection in the careleſs, and excited gratitude in the unthinking? We commit a great miſtake, when we confine the influence of example to the higher ranks of ſociety. It is an influence of which people in every rank and in every ſituation are in ſome degree poſſeſſed. Happy they who make ſuch a uſe of it as the family of whom we are now ſpeaking."

'You, ſir,' ſaid Bridgetina, 'have ſo many prejudices, that it is impoſſible to argue with you. It may, to be ſure, be very well for old Mrs. Biggs and her ſon, that her daughters were not philoſophers; but you will never make me believe, that if they had been taught "to energize according to the flower and ſummit of their nature," they would not have done more for general utility.'

'And who is this General Utility?' cried Mrs. Botherim, 'whoſe name is for ever in Biddy's mouth? She is always in a pet when I aſk her, as if I ſhould know all about him as well as ſhe; but I am ſure ſhe may well know I never ſeed a General but General Villers, in all my life.'

'General Utility, my dear madam,' ſaid Dr. Orwell, ſmiling, 'is an ideal perſonage, a ſort of Will o' the wiſp, whom ſome people go a great way out of the road to find, but ſtill ſee him ſhining in ſome diſtant and unbeaten track; while, if they would keep at home, and look for him

in

in the plain path of chriſtian duty, they would never miſs their aim.'

The entrance of Lady Aldgate and her daughter put an end to the converſation, and gave to Doctor and Miſs Orwell an opportunity, of which they willingly availed themſelves, of taking leave.

CHAP. XVIII.

"Let reaſon teach what paſſion fain would hide,
"That Hymen's bands by prudence ſhould be tied;
"Venus in vain the wedded pair would crown,
"If angry fortune on their union frown."

LYTTLETON.

GREATLY had the ſanguine ſpirit of Carradine been mortified, by the unfavourable report that had been made to him of the ſentiments of his miſtreſs. That report had, however, been given by her father in terms ſo obliging, as though it greatly damped, did not entirely extinguiſh every hope. Perhaps her heart might be melted by a love-letter. He had heard of ſuch things, and reſolved to try the experiment. Writing, it is true, was not poor Carradine's fort; but taſks more difficult would at this time have appeared trifling to his ardent mind. After ſpending the whole of the evening and great part of the night in writing and re-writing the important ſcroll, he at length produced an epiſtle, which, if not a firſt-rate piece of oratory, contained at leaſt as much good-ſenſe as any love-letter we have ever had the pleaſure of peruſing.

It was received by Harriet at ſuch an early hour as gave her ſufficient time to anſwer it before breakfaſt. By being delivered in preſence of her friend, it laid her under the neceſſity of breaking the ſilence ſhe had hitherto obſerved to Maria on the ſubject of Carradine's addreſſes. Superior to that mean vanity which leads little minds to exult in expoſing to the view of others the mortification of a rejected lover, ſhe conſidered every principle of delicacy and honour as engaged in keeping his ſecret. To have made the affections of any human being the object of her ridicule, ſhe would have deemed in the laſt degree cruel and unjuſtifiable. The behaviour of many of her companions had, in this particular, appeared odious in her eyes; and ſo far was ſhe from following their example, that till the introduction of Carradine's letter, (when any longer concealment would have worn the appearance of myſtery) ſhe had not even given her boſom-friend a hint upon the ſubject.

In her anſwer to Carradine, ſhe united firmneſs to delicacy, and candour to politeneſs. She did not conſider the circumſtance of her being ſingled out from among her ſex, as the perſon with whom he would wiſh to ſpend his days, as giving her any right to treat him with ſcorn or indignity; but at the ſame time had too much regard for her own honour and his repoſe, to give him a hope which ſhe did not mean to realize.

Poor Carradine had no ſooner diſpatched his letter, than he repented him of his raſhneſs. It then occurred to him, that through the medium of Mrs. Fielding he might more effectually have pleaded his cauſe; and the inſtant the idea was ſtarted he reſolved to purſue it, hoping that the intereſt

intereſt of Mrs. Fielding might ſtill be ſo far exerted in his favour, as to prevent Miſs Orwell from extinguiſhing his hopes by a poſitive refuſal. He flew to Hanover-ſquare on the inſtant, or rather would have flown if wings could have been procured, but for theſe a hackney-coach is, alas! a ſorry ſubſtitute. In vain did he ſwear at the coachman, in vain did he anathematize the horſes; neither coachman nor horſes could be prevailed on to keep pace with his impatient ſpirit. At length arrived, he ſprung to the door, and told the ſervant who opened it, that he muſt ſee Mrs. Fielding on a buſineſs of importance immediately.

"My miſtreſs is not yet up," replied the footman; "but if you will ſtep into the breakfaſt-parlour, I dare ſay ſhe will be down in leſs than an hour."

'An hour!' 'ſdeath, an age! For heaven's ſake, at leaſt deſire her maid to inform her that I am here, and greatly wiſh to ſee her.'

The man obeyed, and in leſs than half an hour Mrs. Fielding was with him. He abruptly informed her of the purport of his viſit, and vehemently beſought her intereſt in his favour; intreating her to go immediately to Miſs Orwell, to urge her to grant him the favour of an interview.

While he yet ſpoke, he heard the voice of Harriet on the ſtairs, and involuntarily opening the door, he ſaw the anſwer to his letter in the hands of the ſervant, to whom Miſs Orwell had juſt delivered it. He impatiently ſnatched it from him, and caſting his eye over the contents, gave way to an agony of deſpair.

Mrs. Fielding, having peruſed the letter, told him, that after ſuch a candid declaration of her ſentiments,

ſentiments, it would be offering an inſult to the delicacy of Miſs Orwell to perſevere in his ſuit. The woman (ſhe obſerved) who after ſuch a poſitive rejection could be flattered into a change of mind, muſt be the imbecile child of vanity. Such, ſhe was certain, was not Harriet Orwell. She therefore adviſed him to bear with manly firmneſs an evil that could not be remedied, and to endeavour by abſence to wear off the impreſſion.

Carradine liſtened to her for a ſhort time in ſilence, and then coldly thanking her for her advice, abruptly took his leave. There was a certain fermenting principle in his mind, which, laying hold of whatever happened to be the preſent object of intereſt, worked it up to ſuch a ſtate of effervescence, as rendered it abſolutely neceſſary for him to have a confidant to receive the overflowings of his heart.

Finding ſolitude intolerable, he bent his way to Henry Sydney, in order to vent to him thoſe feelings of chagrin and diſappointment which he no longer had patience to confine to his own breaſt. Henry was alone, and not (as many of our fair readers doubtleſs will expect) confined to his bed by a relapſe of fever, or raving in a beautiful delirium of deſpair; but penſively ſitting by the fire-ſide with a book in his hand. We are ſenſible that a dangerous fit of illneſs would in his circumſtances have been vaſtly more becoming, and much more natural, in the hero of a novel. We do not preſume to ſay, that youth and a good conſtitution ought to be admitted as any apology for his perſevering in convaleſcence at ſuch a time, but ſimply own the fact. That he may not, however, entirely loſe the intereſt we hope he has obtained in the hearts

hearts of our fair raeders, we muſt not omit adding that he looked as melancholy as poſſible. Soon, however, was his melancholy diſſipated by Carradine; who, after a few incoherent ſentences, and as many exclamations, of which Henry could not gueſs the meaning, put into his hands the letter of Harriet, which had been to him as the ſentence of never-ending miſery.

Henry peruſed it with an emotion even ſuperior to his own. "Charming, charming Harriet!" cried he, after having with his eye devoured the contents; "How diſintereſted! how noble! how generous!"

'Generous!' cried Carradine; 'one would think you were glad ſhe had refuſed me!'

"Forgive me, Carradine!" ſaid Henry, offering him his hand; "but you are yourſelf ſo generous and ſo open, that I ſhould hate myſelf if I deceived you. I love Harriet Orwell. I have long loved her. Even from infancy our hearts have been united in the bonds of the tendereſt friendſhip. Want of fortune has alone prevented me from urging her to unite her fate with mine. Judge, then, if I can ſay I am ſorry at a circumſtance which revives my hopes, and raiſes me from the very brink of deſpair."

Carradine ſtarted back, and regarded him for a moment with a look of phrenſy. Then haſtily turning from him, he ſtrided four or five times up and down the room, and at length retiring to the further window, ſtood for ſome minutes ſilent. Henry reproached himſelf for having inflicted an additional wound in the breaſt of his rival. He was afraid to ſpeak, leſt whatever he ſhould ſay might wear the appearance of triumphing in his diſappointment. The ſilence was at length broken by Carradine, who coming

up

up to Henry, and taking the hand he had before rejected, 'Sydney,' said he, 'you are a happy fellow! but don't think me the wretch to repine at your felicity. No. If I had known you had a prior claim to her affections, curse me if I would have interfered with it. I would perish sooner than do any thing so base!"

Henry spoke the effusions of his heart, in giving him the praise his generosity so truly merited; and assured him, that though her refusal of an offer so advantageous, from a character so unexceptionable, gave him some cause for hope, he was far from being certain of success. So well in the conversation that ensued did Henry manage the ardent temper of Carradine, that he left him in a great measure reconciled to a disappointment, which, but an hour before, he had considered in the light of an event which was to tinge the colour of his future days with misery.

The recovery of Henry was now so rapid, that on the very following day he surprised his friends by an unexpected visit. Though dinner had been some time over, the ladies had not yet retired to the drawing-room, when Henry made his appearance. Mrs. Fielding received him with joy, and welcomed his return with an embrace that spoke the feelings of maternal affection.

"Thank Heaven! that my brother, my dear brother is again restored to us!" exclaimed Maria, affectionately retaining one hand, while Dr. Orwell and Mr. Churchill alternately took the other. Harriet alone did not advance to meet him in the general joy; her voice only was unheard, but the congratulations which her faltering tongue could not pronounce, beamed from her eyes in a look of ineffable delight, while pleasure and surprise suffused her glowing cheek with

with crimſon. When he came up to where ſhe ſtood, ſhe held out her hand with a complaceney which ſeemed to aſſure Henry that his preſence did not diſpleaſe her; and though the few words ſhe ſtammered out were perfectly unintelligible to every one beſides, it would appear that he ſufficiently underſtood their meaning.

The remainder of the evening was excluſively devoted to friendſhip; Mrs. Fielding giving orders that no viſitor ſhould be admitted to intrude upon the ſocial circle. And though neither cards nor ſcandal were introduced, we do not find that time appeared particularly tedious to any of the party.

While Henry was again enjoying a happineſs, rendered doubly dear to him from the ſufferings he had lately endured, his father, full of anxious ſolicitude for his felicity, was making every effort to render it compleat. He took the earlieſt opportunity of informing Doctor Orwell of his ſon's attachment to his daughter, and found the Doctor more pleaſed than ſurpriſed at the information. He had in truth long ago obſerved the growing paſſion, and as it was the happineſs, not the affluence, of his child, that was the object of his wiſhes, nothing was more deſirable in his eyes than to behold her united to a man of Henry's ſenſe and virtue.

Since the time that theſe old gentlemen had entered into the married ſtate, they had lived ſo ſecluded from the world, that the rapid progreſs of luxury had almoſt eſcaped their obſervation. In an humble mediocrity of fortune, they had themſelves found happineſs; and it did not readily enter into their imaginations to conceive, why beginning the world with a ſplendid eſtabliſhment was more neceſſary to their children

children than it had been to themſelves. To the mind of Mr. Sydney a monopoly of wealth and power appeared an evil of mighty magnitude; and far from wiſhing his children to become acceſſaries, in continuing a ſyſtem to which, in his opinion, might be fairly attributed the greater part of the miſeries that have ſcourged the human race, he had laboured to impreſs their minds with a ſenſe of its turpitude and injuſtice. Political ſcience had long been his favourite ſtudy; and though a perfect equality of conditions he conſidered to be impracticable and abſurd, the advantages that would reſult to ſociety from ſuch a diſſemination of the wealth of a country as ſhould render the extremes of wealth and poverty unknown, appeared to him ſo obvious, that he wondered how it could eſcape the obſervation of an enlightened mind. He had himſelf written a tract upon the ſubject, which he addreſſed to the great landed proprietors of Great-Britain; clearly demonſtrating it to be their bounden duty, by making an equal diviſion of their property among their children, to begin that gradual and rational reform, which would ultimately be productive of an increaſe of public happineſs and virtue.

Doctor Orwell, though leſs inclined to abſtract ſpeculation than his friend, perfectly coincided with him in principle. With reſpect to the happineſs of their children, their ſentiments were in uniſon; and to promote their union they readily agreed to give up, on both ſides, ſuch a part of their preſent income as they deemed ſufficient to eſtabliſh the people in ſome degree of comfort.

The reſult of their conſultations was immediately communicated to Henry by his father, who informed him, that he was now at full liberty

berty to diſcloſe his ſentiments to Harriet, ſince the conſent of her father had given a ſanction to his wiſhes.

With ſome confuſion Henry was obliged to confeſs, that he had anticipated the permiſſion ſo graciouſly beſtowed. Harriet was already miſtreſs of every ſecret of his heart: Attracted by the ſound of the harpſichord to Mrs. Fielding's muſic-room, he had there found Harriet alone; the opportunity was irreſiſtible. The apprehenſion of her father's diſpleaſure, the threatened loſs of Mrs. Fielding's friendſhip, the imprudence of marrying without a fortune, all were at that moment forgotten; and the dread of ſuffering from the horrid idea of another and perhaps more fortunate rival, appeared to him a conſideration paramount to every other. His father liſtened to his apology with a ſmile, that told him he had no great difficulty in pronouncing his pardon. He moreover promiſed to ſpeak to Mrs. Fielding on the ſubject, and hoped to be able to avert her diſpleaſure at ſuch a very direct breach of her injunctions.

Mr. Sydney was as good as his word; he told her of the plan agreed to by Dr. Orwell and himſelf for the union of their families, and begged to have her opinion concerning it.

"I muſt ſpeak to Miſs Orwell on the ſubject before I can reply to your queſtion," ſaid Mrs. Fielding; and ſtepping to the next room, where ſhe knew Harriet was then employed in writing to her ſiſter, "I come, my dear," ſaid ſhe, "to ſpeak to you on matters of ſuch importance to your happineſs, that I ſhall not apologize for interrupting you." Harriet, anticipating the ſubject on which ſhe intended to interrogate her, bowed in ſome confuſion. Mrs. Fielding proceeded

ceeded—"I am afraid you will set me down for an intermeddling old woman; but I do assure you, it is not from the desire of gratifying an old maidish curiosity that I am prompted to ask you some questions, which I hope you will have the good-nature to forgive, and the ingenuousness to answer."

Harriet again bowed assent.

"The reasons you gave me for refusing the addresses of Mr. Carradine were all calculated to do you honour. They were such as I could not but approve; but, tell me, my dear, was there no other little lurking motive?—Ah! that blush is a sufficient reply, and I shall require no other. Had Henry Sydney a fortune equal to Carradine's, I should not be surprised at your preferring him; but my dear Miss Oswell, do you consider what you are about to do? Have you duly weighed the consequences?

'I hope I have, Madam; but if you see any objections—if you—pray go on, I shall be much obliged to you for your opinion and advice.'

Mrs. Fielding resumed:—"Though we are all the poor dependants on futurity, and though it be our sanguine hope of future felicity that makes up the greater part of our present enjoyment, yet we do almost always err by making the estimate of that felicity from present feeling. While inspired by youthful passion, we think that love alone will constitute the happiness of our future days; the evils of poverty are then despised, and when viewed at a distance are perhaps converted by fancy into a charming addition to romantic tenderness. If imagination have thus deceived you, let me beg of you, before it is too late, to dismiss the vain illusion, and take a real view of the cares and vexations that may await you."

'I am

'I am fully ſenſible of the truth of all you have ſaid,' returned Harriet, 'as well as of your goodneſs in reminding me of it. The ſubject is not new to my reflections; if I had been brought up in the lap of luxury and ſloth, or accuſtomed to place my happineſs in the gratification of vanity, I am aware of the miſery that would await a change of circumſtances. But all my habits have been thoſe of active induſtry, and all my hopes of happineſs have been taught to reſt in the boſom of domeſtic peace. For myſelf I have therefore nothing to fear; but for Henry—'

"You are a charming girl!" cried Mrs. Fielding, tenderly embracing her, "and truly deſerving of the happineſs that I hope awaits you. But here comes Henry, and I muſt now talk a little with him; ſo pray ſtep into the next room for a few minutes. Well, ſir," continued Mrs. Fielding, addreſſing herſelf to Henry as Harriet retired, "I ſee the friendſhip of an old woman is not ſo valuable in your eyes as the affections of a young one. Nay, nay, don't offer any apology, you muſt hear me out. I told you, I never ſhould conſent to your marrying without a fortune adequate to your ſupport; and I ſhall keep my word. Here," continued ſhe, taking a bundle of papers from her pocket, and preſenting them to Henry, "on peruſing theſe you will perceive, that I then addreſſed myſelf to a man who was his own maſter. Forgive me for having prolonged the term of your probation, but I too well knew the danger of habits of luxury and diſſipation, not to wiſh to ſave the child I had adopted from their dominion. It was on this account I directed you to the choice of a profeſſion which, while it afforded an immediate object to your mind, and prevented the

the ruſt of idleneſs from corroding your faculties, put it in your power to be uſeful to your fellow-creatures. The man without employment is a cypher in ſociety; dependent upon others for an adventitious value, he is in himſelf contemptible. May you, my ſon, (for as ſuch I ſhall ever conſider you) ſo employ your fortune and your talents, as to make them inſtrumental to your eternal happineſs. And in the dear girl you have choſen for a wife, may you receive as great a reward as this world can beſtow. So GOD bleſs you!"

Henry ſeized the hand that ſhe held out to him, and involuntarily dropping on his knees, preſſed it to his lips. His emotion was too great for utterance; and Mrs. Fielding, wiſhing to eſcape the effuſions of his gratitude, immediately left the room.

It was ſome time before Henry could ſufficiently compoſe himſelf to proceed to the examination of the papers ſhe had left with him; when he did, he found a deed of gift for ten thouſand pounds, made on the day he had attained his fifth year. The ſum had been at that period lodged in the hands of truſtees, who received the intereſt, which they laid out in the funds, and regularly accounted for the ſtock thus accumulated. The principal was now, even after deducting the two hundred a year allowed for his education, nearly doubled; ſo that he ſaw himſelf in poſſeſſion of one thouſand pounds a year, independent of his profeſſion.

Harriet, who had in the adjoining apartment watched the departure of Mrs. Fielding, and expected Henry would inſtantly join her, was not a little diſappointed at his delay. She began to perſuade herſelf that the arguments urged by prudence

prudence had prevailed upon his mind, and that he, perhaps, at that moment was ſtruck with repentance for the raſhneſs of his declaration. A ſmall ſpark of latent pride began to operate upon her mind. She would no longer be the cauſe of his uneaſineſs; ſhe would free him from the fetters of an engagement, of which it was plain he already began to feel the weight. Impreſſed with this idea, ſhe gently opened the door that ſeparated the two apartments, the firſt view ſhe took of Henry confirmed her ſuſpicions; but the firſt ſentence he uttered baniſhed them from her heart for ever!

CHAP. XIX.

"Will you not now the pair of ſages praiſe,
"Who the ſame end purſued by different ways?
"One pity'd, one condemn'd, the woeful times;
"One laughed at follies, one lamented crimes."
DRYDEN'S TRANS. OF JUV. SAT. X. 28.

AS lovers are of all people in the world thoſe whoſe company we have found moſt inſupportably inſipid, we ſhall not tire our readers by confining them to it for too great a length of time, but briefly inform them, that Mr. Churchill having found in the charms of Maria a conſolation for his late diſappointment, obtained her father's conſent to lead her to the altar at the ſame time that Henry and his bride were to exchange their vows. While the preparations were going on for the double nuptials, Doctor Orwell found it neceſſary to return to W——, but

but propoſed coming up with his youngeſt daughter before the ceremony took place. Mr. Sydney, having procured a young clergyman to officiate in his abſence, readily conſented to remain in London till he could be accompanied to the country by his children. While fixing on houſes for their future reſidence, giving directions about repairs, purchaſing furniture, plate, &c. &c. occupied the mornings of the young people, Mr. Sydney employed his at the Muſeums of Natural Hiſtory, which particularly attracted his attention. In theſe he found a never-failing ſource of amuſement, and was only mortified on perceiving the little intereſt the young people ſeemed to take in his elaborate deſcriptions. Even Maria, who in the country had liſtened to the ſubject with ſo much complacency, had apparently loſt much of her relish for plants and butterflies, ſince her reſidence in London. Hoping, however, that her taſte was not as yet quite loſt, he one day brought her home a ſmall chryſalis of uncommon beauty, with which a friend had preſented him; while ſhe complacently expreſſed her admiration Churchill entered the room, and perceiving how ſhe was engaged, peeped over her ſhoulder at the object of her contemplation.

"Is it not very beautiful?" ſaid ſhe, looking up to him with an enchanting ſmile.

'It is, indeed,' replied he, daſhing with his finger and thumb the little chryſalis into the fire, but ſtill keeping his eyes fixed upon the paper.

"Bleſs me!" exclaimed Maria, "what have you done? Where is the chryſalis? Why did you throw it away?"

'Indeed, ſir,' ſaid Mr. Sydney, gravely, 'I ſhall take care how I permit ſuch a treaſure to come into your way again.'

"What

"What have I done?" cried Churchill, in amazement; "of what treasure do you speak? I have not surely injured the poem Maria was looking at, which, if not a first-rate performance, is certainly not destitute of merit, if there be merit in truth."

Maria, though vexed at the mortification it occasioned to her father, could scarcely forbear laughing at her lover's mistake. The chrysalis was happily not irrecoverably lost. After having carefully picked it from the ashes, and restored it to him who best knew its value, she examined the lines that had attracted the attention of Mr. Churchill, and at his request read them aloud.

TO SELFISHNESS.

NO, Selfishness, thou art not Nature's child!
Of proud and pamper'd Luxury thou wer't born!
Not in the rural vale, or distant wild,
But 'mid those polish'd scenes where Plenty pours her horn.

Behold that youth, in whose soul-beaming eye
Sits Sympathy, and each affection kind;
His bosom swells with Pity's tender sigh,
And at another's bliss warm glows his gen'rous mind.

No cold distrust hath ever chill'd his heart,
No blank reserve his truth-taught lips hath seal'd;
Ardent he seeks his feelings to impart,
And to the friend he loves his inmost soul's reveal'd.

Is there who cheer'd him in the hour of woe,
Who from his eyes has wip'd Affliction's tear?
Pure Gratitude's full stream doth ceaseless flow,
Enhancing, as it runs, each obligation dear.

Doth rude Necessity's imperious law
In toilsome business half his hours employ?

From

From ſleep, from paſtime, ſtill he time can draw,
To aid the precious fund of dear domeſtic joy.

His ſoul a ſiſter's fond affection charms,
He joys to meet maternal love's mild beam;
The bliſs of bleſſing all his boſom warms,
And dear doth his pure heart the ſocial circle deem.

Such is the youth in Nature's boſom bred,
While yet a ſtranger to the poliſh'd world;
Behold him now in Faſhion's gay walks tread,
And in the vortex vile of Diſſipation whirl'd.

As Knareſborough's rills* arreſt the ſilken zone,
And drop by drop inſidious works its change,
Till the gay flutt'rer, ſtiff'ning into ſtone,
In form alone eſcapes the transformation ſtrange!

So love of Pleaſure by degrees devours
Each nobler, finer feeling of the heart;
So Pride and Vanity's transforming pow'rs
Doth callous Selfiſhneſs e'en to its core impart.

See him, who erſt with Sympathy's warm zeal
Explor'd the rhet'rick of the aſking eye;
Who with the poor would ſhare his ſcanty meal,
And at ſoft Pity's call could his own wants deny;

Now preſs'd by wants that Nature never knew,
(Fantaſtic wants! imperious as vain)
He for himſelf finds Fortune's gifts too few,
Nor at ſoft Pity's call will one wild wiſh reſtrain.

He, whoſe warm heart with ſympathetic glow
Shar'd all the boſom-feelings of a friend,
Now in gay crouds, or at the public ſhew,
In heartleſs, joyleſs pomp prefers his hours to ſpend.

No more the ſocial fire-ſide circle charms,
No more a mother's ſmiles he joys to meet;
Fraternal love no more his boſom warms,
Nor thoughts of giving joy imparts one rapture ſweet.

* Alluding to the petrefaction of ribbons ſo quickly effected by the Dropping-Well of Knareſborough.

No, Selfishness, thou art not Nature's child;
Of proud and pamper'd Luxury thou wer't born;
Not in the rural vale, or desert wild,
But in those polish'd scenes where Plenty pours her horn.

Though the name of Carradine was never mentioned at Mrs. Fielding's, he was not forgotten by any of the party. The generous heart of Henry felt for the mortification of his rival, and finding that he did not come again to him, he took the earliest opportunity of calling at his lodgings. He there learned that Carradine had set off for Bath the day after he had last seen him, and from thence he soon after received from him the following letter:

"*My dear Sydney,*

"IMMEDIATELY on leaving you, I met with a party of friends who, like myself, were on the wing for India; but as the fleet will not be ready to sail for a few weeks, they resolved to take a dash to Bath in the interim. I liked the thought, and was glad to accompany them; and here we are beating about like so many spaniels in a rabbit-warren. No cessation from amusement. Morning, noon, and night, all here are on the scent of pleasure; but for what is called *pleasure* I find I have lost somewhat of my relish, for I now find living in a croud to be abominably insipid. Poor Doctor Orwell was shocked at the idea of girls of character going to the Indian market; but had he come to Bath, he might have beheld a perpetual fair, where every ball-room may be considered as a booth for the display of beauty to be disposed of to the highest matrimonial bidder. Having been introduced to some very pleasant fellows, all of them men of large fortune and

high connexions, I have through them had an opportunity of making what acquaintance I chose. The mothers have all smiled upon me, and I have had no reason to complain of my reception from the daughters. I have admired the beauty of several, and do not know, had it been less pressed upon my observation, what effect it might have had upon my heart. But what one sees morning, noon, and night, soon ceases to interest; and in a society where intimacy takes place without acquaintance, the mind can never rivet the chain which is forged by the senses.

"Harriet Orwell would not, I think, like Bath. No; she likes *conversation*, and here is only *talk*. But were Harriet Orwell here, she would, I make no doubt, soon discover some congenial souls, who form a more rational society than that which has come within the sphere of my observation. But why do I mention Harriet Orwell? Why, to shew you that I can do it without pain; and to convince you that my heart has been made the better, and not the worse, for its admiration of excellence.

"From the tenor of my letter, you will perceive that this trip has been of use to my spirits, and if you are the generous fellow I take you for, you will entirely restore them. To do this, you must permit me to contribute to your happiness. I am at present looking out for some person in whose hands I can deposit two thousand pounds. It is the remainder of the sum I brought with me from India. I am perfectly careless about the interest, nor would the loss of the principal affect me; so that it is no compliment to say that the use of it is very much at your service. I hate the lawyers, and am an enemy to the stamp-act; I shall therefore have

nothing

nothing to say to bonds or parchments, but leave you to manage the sum I have mentioned entirely as you please, till my return to Europe; and am, &c. &c.

BASIL CARRADINE.

The reader's heart, if he have one, will be at no loss to suggest the reply which Henry made to the friendly offer of his truly generous rival. Another letter of the same date, received from Dr. Orwell, assigned to him a task of a more unpleasant nature. Tidings of Mr. Glib's having been arrested and thrown into prison had reached W——; and the good Doctor, who never remembered the faults of the unfortunate, intreated his friends to interest themselves in his behalf, and if possible, to extricate him from the horrors of confinement.

Following the directions they had received, Mr. Sydney and his son proceeded to Newgate; where, in a gloomy and desolate apartment, they found the unhappy Glib, a prey to the most abject dejection. The flippancy of his manner was now exchanged for an air of despondency, which, however, a little brightened up on being informed of the purport of their visit. In order to know how far there was a possibility of serving him, it was necessary to have an accurate account of the state of his affairs; in giving which he was obliged to confess himself the dupe of Vallaton, against whom he now poured forth all the bitterness of invective.

Mr. Sydney was at much pains to turn the current of his wrath from the man to the principles on which he had acted; these the old gentleman was at great pains to pourtray in their proper colours. What he learned from Glib

of the conduct of Vallaton, impreſſed him with a deep ſorrow for the fate of poor Julia, and gave him a freſh anxiety concerning her ſituation; and finding that Glib, though he could not himſelf furniſh any information concerning them, ſuſpected Mr. Myope of being acquainted with the place of their concealment, he reſolved immediately to apply to that gentleman on the ſubject.

While Henry remained to take in writing the ſtatement which Glib had given of his affairs, his father proceeded to Myope's lodgings, and had the good fortune of finding him at home, and alone. He introduced himſelf without difficulty, but found the philoſopher very little inclined to gratify him on the ſubject of his enquiries. After receiving ſome evaſive anſwers to his plain queſtions, Mr. Sydney with ſome indignation ſaid, "After the accounts I have juſt received from a perſon whom the perfidious villainy of this man has involved in ruin, I cannot wonder that he ſhould ſkulk in concealment; but from you, ſir, I ſhould expect better than to protect a man who, as far as I can learn, has acted like a ſcoundrel in every thing."

"Scoundrels, ſir," ſaid Mr. Myope, 'are frequently, indeed almoſt always, men of talents, and great talents are great energies; and great energies cannot but flow from a powerful ſenſe of fitneſs and juſtice. You allude, I ſuppoſe, to Mr. Vallaton's conduct as treaſurer to the Hottentonian committee, from which conduct Mr. Glib has been a ſufferer. But, ſir, Mr. Vallaton no doubt perceived a degree of fitneſs in appropriating thoſe ſums to himſelf, which a man of more confined intellect might not have diſcovered."

'Is

"Is it poſſible, ſir," cried Mr. Sydney, "that a man of your ſeeming gravity can be the apologiſt of ſuch crimes?"

'There is no ſuch thing as crime,' replied Myope; 'and though Mr. Vallaton may, perhaps, in ſome inſtances have acted erroneouſly, yet it is inconteſtably proved, that as a man of talents he cannot be deſtitute of virtue.'

"The Devil himſelf is repreſented as poſſeſſed of talents," returned Mr. Sydney, "and of him the doctrines you have mentioned are truly worthy."

'The Devil!' rejoined Mr. Myope; 'why, my dear ſir, the Devil is the firſt of heroes! I cannot conceive a greater compliment than to be compared to the Devil. You do not know in what high eſtimation his character is held by modern philoſophers. It is poſſible that his energies, like thoſe of Mr. Vallaton, centered too much in perſonal regards; but take him all in all, his is the firſt of imaginary characters that it ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. Oh, the virtues of the Devil are ineſtimable!'

"Mr. Vallaton has indeed proved a very cloſe imitator of the arch apoſtate," ſaid Mr. Sydney; "and I am afraid Miſs Delmond, like our general mother, will find that ſhe has liſtened to the voice of this black ſeducer to be

"'Deſpoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliſs!"

Can you, ſir, inform me (for, from the infamous character of the man, I have my doubts) whether he and Miſs Delmond are really married?"

'I cannot ſpeak to a certainty,' replied Myope; but all I can ſay is, that I do not think Mr. Val-

laton a man likely to ſanction by his example an inſtitution ſo immoral and injurious to the intereſts of ſociety.'

Mr. Sydney looked aghaſt. "Is it poſſible," cried he, "that vice ſhould thus audaciouſly aſſume the name of virtue?"

'And pray, ſir,' returned Myope, 'what is virtue, but another name for happineſs? Is not happineſs the only true end of exiſtence?'

"That happineſs is the only true end of exiſtence, I grant you," ſaid Mr. Sydney; "and if you can point out a ſingle inſtance where an encreaſe of happineſs has been the reſult of this new ſyſtem of morals, I ſhall allow your argument to have ſome weight."

'The new morality is too ſublime for the preſent depraved and diſtempered ſtate of human ſociety,' rejoined Mr. Myope. 'The experiments that have been made in it have been rather premature, and therefore cannot expect to have been followed with advantageous conſequences to the individuals, who have nobly ſtemmed the torrent of prejudice to make them.'

"A proof to me," replied Mr. Sydney, "of the ſuperiority of thoſe principles which are adapted to every ſtate of ſociety, and to every circumſtance in which a human being can be placed; which, by governing the paſſions and regulating the affections of the heart, bring peace to the ſoul, and are equally calculated for enhancing the enjoyment of proſperity by preſerving from its temptations, and of allaying the bitterneſs of adverſity by ſaving from deſpair."

"A contemptuous ſmile, which overſpread the countenance of Mr. Myope as Mr. Sydney pronounced the laſt ſentence, indicated a ſneering reply; but a letter, which was at that mo-

ment

ment put into his hands by his ſervant, gave a new expreſſion to every feature, and for the ſupercilious ſmile of ſcorn, ſubſtituted the frown of fury and revenge. 'Vallaton is indeed a villain!' exclaimed he, ſtamping his foot in a paroxyſm of rage. 'Inſidious ſerpent! *He* ſeduce my Emmeline! *He* entice her to leave me in this manner! Ungrateful wretch! To act thus by *me*! It is intolerable!' In this incoherent manner did he run on for ſome time, before Mr. Sydney could at all comprehend the cauſe of his inquietude. At length, however, he diſcovered that Mr. Vallaton had that morning ſet off for France with *the Goddeſs of Reaſon*, of whom it now appeared he had long been the favoured lover.

It may perhaps be expected, that Mr. Sydney ſhould with avidity avail himſelf of ſo favourable an opportunity of triumphing in the diſcomfiture of an opponent; ſo far, however, was Mr. Sydney from doing ſo, that the expreſſions which would ſo naturally have ſlid to the tongue of many good people in ſimilar circumſtances, never once found their way to his. Obſerving the mind of Mr. Myope too much agitated for a diſcuſſion on principles, he only ſtaid with him until he obtained an addreſs to the lodgings Vallaton had lately occupied; and thither the old gentleman inſtantly hurried, in hopes of gaining ſome information concerning the injured and now forſaken Julia. His ſolicitude was fruitleſs. Vallaton and Julia had left theſe lodgings a fortnight, nor could the people of the houſe furniſh him with any clue to their next place of abode. Oppreſſed by fatigue, and overwhelmed with regret, he returned to Mrs. Fielding's, where happineſs beamed on every countenance,

and the ſweet flutterings of youthful hope, or the more delicious feelings of internal ſatisfaction, dwelt in every heart. In the contemplation of ſuch a ſcene every ſelfiſh ſorrow would have been annihilated. The heart of Mr. Sydney ſwelled with gratitude to the Giver of all good, for making him a witneſs of the happineſs of his children, but had been too deeply wounded in the courſe of the morning to admit of an immediate return of its wonted ſerenity.

CHAP. XX.

" Then gently ſcan your brother man,
" Still gentler, ſiſter woman;
" Though they may gang a kennin wrang,
" To ſtep aſide is human.
" Who made the heart, 'tis he alone
" Decidedly can try us;
" He knows each *chord*, its *various tone*,
" Each ſpring, its various bias:
" Then at the balance let's be mute,
" *We never can adjuſt it*;
" What's done we partly may compute,
" *But never what's reſiſted.*"

BURNS.

By the zeal of Mr. Sydney, the liberality of Mrs. Fielding, and the active exertions of Henry, the affairs of Mr. Glib were put into ſuch a train, that in the courſe of a few days he was ſet at liberty. Putting himſelf under the direction of his benefactors, and abjuring all connection with his former aſſociates, he ſet out for W—to re-enter upon the poſſeſſion of his houſe

houſe and ſhop, to re-aſſemble his children round his own fire-ſide, and to receive back his repentant wife, who now forſaken by her gallant, was left a prey to the miſeries of poverty, or the ſtill greater miſeries of vice. Having been mutually to blame, Mr. Sydney ſtrongly recommended to them the duty of mutual forgiveneſs; and ſuch weight had his advice, from the acts of beneficence with which it was prefaced, that they did not ſcruple to adopt it. New ideas of duty, and new perceptions of happineſs, began to open on their minds; attention to buſineſs occupied the hours that had formerly been devoted to the ſtudy of new theories in philoſophy; and inſtead of deſcanting on general utility, they now ſeriouſly applied themſelves to the education of their own children.

Glib, being now convinced that there is no immorality in gratitude, ſcruples not to declare, that he owes to his benefactors not only the re-eſtabliſhment of his credit, but the exiſtence of his happineſs. Nor let the proud reader murmur at our thus tranſgreſſing the order of our hiſtory, to give this concluding ſketch of the adventures of a ſimple tradeſman. It is the affected prerogative of ſelfiſh proſperity to conſider as mere automatons all who move not in its own exalted ſphere; but it is the privilege of philoſophy to view human nature from a ſtill more lofty eminence, from which the paltry diſtinctions of ſituation are loſt to the eye, and the intereſts of humanity aſſert an equal claim to the feelings of the heart.

To return to our narrative. The preparations for the nuptials were now completed; the day fixed on for their celebration was at hand. It was expected by the parties with that chaſtened

hope, which in well-regulated minds attends the often-clouded proſpect of earthly felicity. They felt the fulneſs of ſatisfaction, but were taught by reaſon to ſet bounds to the wild extravagance of joy.

The friendſhip of the two young ladies, which had been knit by a ſympathy of taſte and ſentiment, was ſtrengthened by a ſimilarity of ſituation; nor would the happineſs of either have been compleat, if it had not been ſhared by the other.

" Surely," ſaid Harriet, one day that ſhe was ſitting alone with her friend, " ſurely, Maria, we are highly favoured of Heaven; if our gratitude were proportioned to its gifts, I believe we ſhould do nothing but pray and ſing pſalms from morning to night. Well, I wiſh to GOD that all the world were as happy as we are!"

' And that wiſh, my dear girl,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding, who then entered the room, ' is of itſelf a ſong of thankſgiving more acceptable than a thouſand pſalms. But where is Henry? I have got ſome buſineſs for him, and expected to find him here.'

" He will be here ſoon, I will anſwer for him," ſaid Maria, " and here he is."

' Here, however,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding, ' I cannot at preſent permit him to remain.'

She then put into his hands a billet ſhe had juſt received from the matron of her aſylum, informing her of the admiſſion of an unfortunate young woman, who was ſo very ill as to require immediate medical attendance. Her appearance, ſhe added, was extremely intereſting, and plainly indicated ſomething very ſuperior to her preſent ſituation.

' Come,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding, when Henry had

had read the note, 'let us haſten to this poor unfortunate. The carriage is already at the door; and not to mortify you too much by taking you away, the girls ſhall accompany us. What ſay you, ladies, to my propoſal?"

Their aſſent was readily accorded, and the coachman, obeying the orders of his miſtreſs, drove full ſpeed to the aſylum. On alighting, the young ladies went into the work-room, where they were already known and beloved; while Mrs. Fielding and Henry followed the matron to the chamber of the young ſtranger. There, reclining on the bed in a ſtate of almoſt torpid inſenſibility, they beheld a young perſon, whoſe face was concealed from view by a maſs of pale brown hair, which uncombed and unarranged flowed over it in wild diſorder. The inimitable beauty of her hand and arm attracted their inſtant obſervation; Henry gazed for a moment in ſilence, and then ſuddenly advancing, "Is it poſſible!" cried he, in a ſmothered tone. "Is it Miſs Delmond, Julia Delmond, that I ſee thus?"

At the ſound of that name ſhe haſtily raiſed her head; and with a wild and ſudden motion putting back her hair, frantickly gazed on Henry for a moment, then uttering a loud ſcream, fainted away.

When ſhe recovered, ſhe found herſelf ſupported in the arms of Mrs. Fielding, and her face bathed with the tears which fell faſt from that good lady's eyes. 'Where am I?' cried ſhe, in a quick and hurried voice. 'And who are you? And why do you weep? Did *you* know my father? But be comforted; *you* did not kill him; you did not break his heart. Ah! no,

no,

no, no!' then ſtriking her hand againſt her forehead, ſhe hid her face in Mrs. Fielding's boſom.

"Do not afflict yourſelf thus, my dear child," ſaid Mrs. Fielding; "you are ill, and muſt take care of yourſelf, and here is your old friend and phyſician, Doctor Sydney, who begs leave to attend you, and I dare ſay will join with me in entreating you to diſmiſs every uneaſy thought from your mind. You are not among ſtrangers, but ſurrounded by your beſt and moſt affectionate friends."

'Yes,' ſaid Doctor Sydney, affectionately taking her hand, 'yes, dear Miſs Delmond, you do not know how much pleaſure your recovery will give to many hearts.'

A deep ſigh burſt from her boſom, but as if afraid to look on Henry, ſhe clung to Mrs. Fielding to conceal her face from his obſervation.

"Perhaps," ſaid Mrs. Fielding, "Miſs Delmond would better like to ſee her friend Harriet Orwell."

'Harriet Orwell!' repeated Miſs Delmond; 'ah! no, no, Harriet Orwell would now diſdain to look on the poor forlorn Julia!'

"My Julia! my dear Julia! my ſweet friend!" cried Harriet, who had only waited for a ſignal to approach her, and claſping her in her arms, imprinted an affectionate kiſs on her pale cheek; "Never, never will your friend Harriet forſake you!" Sighs and tears choaked her utterance; while Julia, with all the ſtrength ſhe had left, ſtrained her to her boſom. She attempted to ſpeak, but voice was denied her; the words died away upon her parched and pallid lips, and again ſhe was near fainting, when a timely ſhower of tears ſeemed in ſome meaſure to relieve her ſwoln heart.

It was the relief of nature, and her friends were too judicious to ſeek to ſtop the ſalutary effuſion. Harriet, indeed, ſhed tear for tear; and Maria, who ſtood at a diſtance, apprehenſive of overpowering the poor timid mourner, by the appearance of ſo many people at once, had her full ſhare of the affecting ſcene.

At length Mrs. Fielding obſerved, that they muſt not too far indulge their feelings. That ill as Miſs Delmond evidently was, ſhe thought ſhe might now be removed to her houſe without danger. "And when there," ſaid ſhe, "I hope, under the care of ſo many kind nurſes, ſhe will ſoon be well. Come, my love," ſhe added, kindly preſſing Julia's hand, "do not too much give way to this emotion, but let me prevail upon you to rally your exhauſted ſpirits, and to take ſome refreſhment to enable you to bear the fatigue of the ride."

Again Julia attempted to ſpeak, but her words were not yet audible. With difficulty ſhe ſwallowed the cordial Doctor Sydney had ordered, which ſeeming to reſtore ſome degree of animation to her languid frame, Mrs. Fielding took the opportunity of again urging their immediate departure. Henry begged leave to ſupport her to the carriage. 'And I too,' ſaid Harriet, putting her arm round her waiſt, 'I too will be the ſupporter of my dear Julia.'

She paſſively permitted them to raiſe her from the chair, when, as if recollecting herſelf, ſhe ſhrunk ſuddenly from their aſſiſting arms, exclaiming, "Oh! never, never, never ſhall the houſe of Mrs. Fielding be contaminated by the reception of a wretch like me. Here let me hide myſelf from a world that will deſpiſe me, and here let me die in peace." The effort ſhe made

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in pronouncing theſe words ſhook her whole frame; her eyes rolled wildly round, and ſhe ſeemed ſpeedily relapſing into the ſame diſordered ſtate from which ſhe had ſo lately recovered.

In vain did Harriet ſecond Mrs. Fielding's kind intreaties with all the ſoothing eloquence of friendſhip. She made no other reply than by clinging to the bed-poſt, and ſeveral times repeating, in a hollow tone, "No, no, here, here," and ſome other disjointed words, all, however, plainly indicative of her determined reſolution of not being removed.

Henry at length put an and to the conteſt by declaring, that it would be injurious in her preſent ſtate to perſiſt in it any further.

'Here then, my love, you ſhall ſtay for to-day,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding, 'provided you will ſuffer yourſelf to be put immediately to bed, and take whatever Doctor Sydney orders for you.'

It was then agreed, that ſhe ſhould be left to the care of Harriet, who would on no account leave her. Nor did Henry require the motive of Harriet's preſence to determine him to devote as much of his time as was not engaged by other patients, to the relief of this unhappy girl; though as his hopes reſted more upon the efficacy of confidential friendſhip than on the exertion of medical ſkill, they depended on Harriet ſtill more than on himſelf. After the departure of Mrs. Fielding and Maria he withdrew, telling Harriet ſhe would find him in the parlour whenever ſhe thought his attendance neceſſary. Harriet ſmiled her approbation of his kind ſolicitude, and as ſoon as he was gone, urged Julia to permit herſelf to be immediately undreſſed. Julia made no oppoſition to her propoſal, and as

Harriet

Harriet obſerved her uneaſineſs at the approach of ſtrangers, ſhe herſelf performed the office of her maid. While ſhe endeavoured to confine within the ſmall cap, the matron had provided her, thoſe beautiful treſſes which ſhe had ſo often ſeen adorned with the niceſt care, and remembered how proud Captain Delmond uſed to be of their luxuriant growth, ſhe was ſo forcibly ſtruck with the contraſt the preſent moment preſented, that ſhe could not reſtrain the falling tear. Julia perceived the tender emotion; and ſeizing Harriet's hand, preſſed it to her lips.

"My good, my gentle Harriet!" ſaid ſhe, in a low and tremulous voice, "you alone, of all the world, will have compaſſion on me. It is your innate virtue alone that will not fear contamination from a wretch like me. Oh that my father had had ſuch a child!" Then leaning her head againſt Harriet's ſhoulder, ſhe burſt into a freſh agony of tears. It was a conſiderable time before Harriet's utmoſt efforts could reſtore her to any degree of compoſure; at length ſhe was conveyed to bed, and a ſoporific draught ſoon gave a temporary oblivion to her ſorrows.

Towards the cloſe of evening, Henry, who ſhared with his amiable miſtreſs the taſk of watching the ſlumbers of their unhappy friend, was called out of the room. He ſoon returned, followed by his father, who, to Miſs Orwell's great ſurpriſe, led in his hand the almoſt-forgotten Bridgetina. She took no notice of Harriet, but with trembling ſteps followed Mr. Sydney to the bed-ſide. On beholding the face of Julia, ſhe ſtarted, and laying hold of Mr. Sydney's arm, 'Why,' ſaid ſhe, 'did you not tell me ſhe was dead!'

"Nay, ſhrink not from this ſight," ſaid Mr. Sydney,

Sydney, without noticing her miſtake, "but in that pale face and altered form contemplate the fruits of your boaſted ſyſtem of happineſs and virtue. Lovely, indeed, very lovely was this fallen flower! and long might it have bloomed the delight of every heart, had it not been deprived of thoſe ſupports which GOD and Nature had aſſigned it. Sweet innocent! how cruel was the ſpoiler that laid thy glory in the duſt! how deteſtable the arts that led to thy deſtruction!"

Bridgetina, though not remarkable for the quickneſs of her feelings, was affected. She ſobbed aloud. In pity to her diſtreſs, and in apprehenſion that Julia might be diſturbed by her noiſy grief, Harriet took pains to comfort her. She told her they had every reaſon to hope for Miſs Delmond's ſpeedy recovery. "Even the wound which her peace of mind has received is not mortal," ſaid ſhe; "ſhe will apply to the balm of conſolation, and the principles of religion will aid the power of time, and reſtore her to tranquillity."

'She is not then dead!' cried Bridgetina, eagerly preſſing forward. 'She breathes! I ſee ſhe breathes. Look how ſhe ſmiles! but ah! how ghaſtly is that ſmile! how unlike the playful ſmile of Julia! What has wrought this change?'

"It has been wrought," ſaid Mr. Sydney, "by the ſame deluſive principles that have ſeduced you from the path of filial duty. Had nature beſtowed on you a form as beautiful, or a face as fair, you too would have been the prey of luſt, and the victim of infamy. Be thankful that you have eſcaped a fate ſo dreadful. Repent of having ever dared it; and by your

future

future behaviour to your fond mother, ſtrive to make amends for your paſt conduct."

Bridgetina wept bitterly, but did not refuſe her hand to Mr. Sydney, who led her out of the room, without having given the leaſt diſturbance by their preſence to the profound ſlumbers of Julia.

In order to account for the appearance of our heroine at this juncture, it is neceſſary to mention the proceedings of Mr. Sydney ſubſequent to the interview with Mr. Myope, which has been already related. Mr. Sydney (though a clergyman) was neither *dictatorial, impatient of contradiction, harſh in his cenſures,* nor *illiberal in his judgments.** He ſaw the prejudices of Myope with compaſſion; he felt for the ſituation in which his falſe principles had plunged him, with the acuteſt ſenſibility; and was impelled by his benevolence to exert every power of his ſoul for the reſtoration of his peace.

The mind of Mr. Myope was now in a ſtate peculiarly favourable to the reception of new impreſſions. The ardour with which he had embraced the new theory of morals was ſomewhat abated. Circumſtances had occurred, which even before the deſertion of his friend and miſtreſs, had conſiderably cooled his zeal. This event had given a new turn to his reflections, and he began to doubt whether the recent diſcoveries in morality were likely to be attended with all the beneficial conſequences to mankind, which, in the moment of enthuſiaſm he had ſo fondly predicted. The antipathy he had imbibed againſt the clerical character, made him receive the firſt advances of Mr. Sydney with reluctance; but he ſoon found that zeal is not neceſſarily accompanied with arrogance, and that a preacher

* See Enquirer, p. 232.

of

of Chriſtianity is not always of conſequence *dogmatical and intolerant.*

As Myope had been a zealous leader of ſeveral different ſects of religioniſts, it may be ſuppoſed that Mr. Sydney could offer to him no new arguments in ſupport of Chriſtianity; but however ſtrange it may appear, ſo it was, that the light in which the truths of natural and revealed religion were placed by Mr. Sydney, were ſuch as never before had been preſented to the mind of the philoſopher. He ſought not to perplex by logical definitions; he betrayed no zeal for peculiar tenets; he treated the various explanations of particular paſſages of ſcripture as of very ſmall importance; and ſeemed only anxious for the eſtabliſhment of great and fundamental truths. The God of Mr. Sydney was a God of mercies—a God of conſolation—"the God of lights, with whom there is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of changing." His goſpel, the perfection of benevolence, proclaiming "peace on earth, and good-will towards men."

The enthuſiaſm of Mr. Myope kindled as he ſpoke, but it was not the deſign of Mr. Sydney to excite enthuſiaſm. He repreſented it as the buſineſs of religion to regulate the emotions of the heart, to allay the effervescence of the ſpirits, and to watch over the peculiar tendency of the temper. Its office to conduct the activity of an ardent mind into proper channels, where, inſtead of being expended in vain ſpeculations, it may be productive of real and ſubſtantial good. Far from loading with indiſcriminate abuſe all the opinions which formed a part of Mr. Myope's ſyſtem, Mr. Sydney allowed all the merit that was due to the ſpirit of philanthropy which

which breathed in his notions of benevolence, and gave to his doctrines of sincerity the warmest and most decided applause. But while he applauded the abstract notions entertained of each of these noble principles, he plainly demonstrated their inutility in the direction Mr. Myope had given them; and proved that to these, as well as to every other virtue, the principles of christianity were the best, the only support. "I do indeed admire and applaud the zeal with which you espouse the cause of the poor and oppressed part of our species," said Mr. Sydney; "it does honour to your heart. But what does your system do for them? What does it propose to do?"

'It proposes,' replied Mr. Myope, 'by enlightening the public mind, to render an equality of conditions, by the voluntary cession of property, universal.'

"Supposing this to be practicable," returned Mr. Sydney, "(though how a person who is at all acquainted with the world or with human nature can make the supposition, I am at a loss to imagine) still it does not appear that happiness is the natural and necessary result. Does the experience of those who are most exempt from the physical evils of life, lead us to form such a conclusion? I am sure it does not. And what is the present consequence of such doctrines to the objects of your benevolent regard? To infuse additional gall into the bitter cup of poverty, to add to the burden of human miseries a load of discontent! How different that system of equality preached by Him who emphatically announced himself the friend of the poor and needy! What are riches, or honours, or even the less equivocal blessings of liberty and independence, compared with the glorious certainty of

of the favour of GOD, and the enjoyment of immortal happineſs? By this hope have millions been ſupported under the preſſure of calamities which your ſyſtem could never reach; for in it alone is found a cure for the ſorrows of the heart. The love of glory and the deſire of fame have ſometimes, it is true, animated their votaries into a contempt for the evils of pain, and even of death itſelf; but from the influence of this principle the many muſt ever be excluded. The man who cheriſhes it, and is by his ſituation thrown into obſcurity, where his ſufferings are unnoticed, or regarded with contempt, muſt be miſerable; but abſolute miſery can never in any ſituation be the lot of the chriſtian."

After ſome little heſitation, the truth of Mr. Sydney's aſſertion was acknowledged by Mr. Myope; ſtill, however, the enormous evils attendant on the preſent ſtate of ſociety afforded him an ample field for expatiation and cenſure. Theſe Mr. Sydney canvaſſed one by one, as they were pointed out by the philoſopher. Some he traced to cauſes very different from thoſe from which Mr. Myope had deduced them; ſome he proved to have conſequences leſs injurious than thoſe aſſigned them; and others he candidly gave up, as ſubjects of regret and mortification to every thinking mind; while he evidently ſhewed, that not an evil complained of could have exiſtence in a ſociety, where the ſpirit of chriſtianity was the ruling principle of every heart.

The impreſſion he made upon his learned adverſary was gradual, but it was ſtrong; and at every ſucceſſive converſation he found him leſs tenacious of his former theory, and more inclined

clined to admit the proofs of the truth of that doctrine which alone,

" Amid life's pains, abaſements, emptineſs,
" The ſoul can comfort, elevate, and fill;
" Which only, and which amply this, performs;
" Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above!
" Their terrors thoſe, and theſe their luſtre loſe;
" Eternity depending covers all."*

It was on his return from one of theſe conferences that Mr. Sydney learned the ſituation of Julia. It immediately occurred to him, that an incident ſo ſtriking was more likely to produce an effect on the mind of Bridgetina than any argument that could poſſibly be made uſe of. Mrs. Fielding readily entered into his views, and impatiently waited to know the reſult of the interview they then projected, and from which they expected the moſt ſalutary effects. How far their expectations were anſwered ſhall appear hereafter.

CHAP. XXI.

" Proſtrate fell
" Before him reverent, and there confeſſ'd
" Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd with tears,
" Watering the ground; and with their ſighs the air
" Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite, in ſign
" Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek."

MILTON.

THE ſlumbers of Julia were not refreſhing. She awoke languid and oppreſſed, but perfectly reſtored to her recollection. Harriet, for whom

* Young.

a bed

a bed had been provided in an adjoining room, had retired to ſnatch a ſhort repoſe; and Henry had ſome hours before been obliged to go to the other end of the town, ſo that on awaking, the nurſe was the only perſon near her. To her ſhe addreſſed herſelf in low and trembling accents, "Pray, pray, good woman, be ſo kind as to inform me where I am. I thought I came to the Aſylum of the Deſtitute. Yes, I remember the name—*the Aſylum of the Deſtitute.* Is it there I am?"

'Yes,' replied the nurſe, 'this is the Aſylum of the Deſtitute.'

"Thank GOD!" ſaid Julia, "I am then ſafe. I am under the protection of the virtuous. I believe my head has been diſturbed. It has been ſadly confuſed. I thought ſome dear friends were with me; but it was all a dream. I now ſee it was a dream."

'Miſs Orwell ſat up with you the greateſt part of the night,' ſaid the nurſe.

"Miſs Orwell! Harriet Orwell! Dear amiable girl! And ſhall I not ſee her again?"

'She is only lain down to take a little reſt. Dr. Sydney inſiſted on it before he would go away.'

"Henry Sydney too here! Yes, I think I remember ſeeing him. But how extraordinary is all this! I believe my head is ſtill ſtrangely bewildered, for I can account for nothing."

'It is only the effects of your ſleeping draught, Madam. You had better keep quiet for a little time, and it will ſoon go off;' replied the judicious nurſe, drawing the curtains.

Julia followed her advice, and remained ſilent till the light footſteps of Harriet attracted her attention. She then quickly withdrew the curtains,

tains, and raiſing herſelf up in the bed, held out both her hands to her fair friend, who, tenderly embracing her, made anxious enquiries after her health. "Ah, Harriet! how good, how very good you are! But your kindneſs overpowers me. When laſt I ſaw you, how little did I think I ſhould now be the humbled wretch I am"

'Do not diſtreſs yourſelf, my dear Julia, by too keen a recollection of paſt events. Over theſe we have no controul. Let us occupy our minds by the preſent and the future; and if we do ſo properly, be aſſured there is no evil of which good may not be the reſult.'

"Alas! for me no good remains. No, no; for me all is the darkneſs of deſpair, the gloom of miſery! My father! — Oh, Harriet, you know the circumſtances of his death; tell me, then, nay do not conceal it; tell me, if with his lateſt breath he did not curſe his Julia?"

'No, my dear, your father expired in a better frame of mind; his laſt words were to implore a bleſſing on you. He never ſpoke of you with reſentment, but pitied your deluſion, and I believe from his heart forgave it.'

"Did he, indeed! and did he bleſs me! Oh, my dear, dear papa! how could I—" Here ſhe was interrupted by a flood of tears, which for ſome time rendered her incapable of holding further converſe.

'Do not, my dear Julia,' ſaid Harriet, 'do not, I beſeech you, dwell ſo much upon the paſt. Much as I wiſh to know the particulars of all the cruel circumſtances that have led to our preſent meeting, I will not now permit you to enter upon the ſad detail. We ſhall have ſufficient time for this hereafter, as I hope you will find yourſelf well enough this morning to accompany

company me to Mrs. Fielding's, in whom, I can assure you, you will find a tender and affectionate friend; she will be as a mother to you, till the arrival of your own; and I hope I may this morning have the pleasure of informing Mrs. Delmond, that you are under such respectable protection.'

"Alas! alas! it is impossible. Never can I appear at Mrs. Fielding's; never more can I enjoy the pleasures of society. No, Harriet; I have been a vain, guilty, infatuated creature; but never will I add to my self-condemnation by the meanness of imposture. In retirement, deep retirement, will I bury myself from the notice of the world. Even from you, my kind, my estimable friend—even from you must I hide myself; left your fair fame should suffer by your deigning to pity such a wretch as I. Oh, I am indeed a wretch!

"Have I not steep'd a mother's couch in tears,
"And ting'd a father's dying cheek with shame?"

Oh, for me there is no comfort."

'And think you, Julia, that I am a slave to the *letter*, and a stranger to the *spirit* of virtue! That you have erred, I regret; but that you are sensible of your error, gives you a claim not only to my esteem, but my admiration. For how much less effort does it require to keep in the onward path of virtue, than to recover it when gone but a single step astray? Amply, I am assured, shall your future life compensate the fault of inexperienced youth. Cheer up, then, my Julia; and believe that you may yet be doubly dear to all who ever loved you.'

"Ah, Harriet! your words are a cordial (what a cordial!) to my drooping heart." Here she fervently pressed the hand of Harriet to her lips;

lips; then dropping it, and looking timidly in her face, while a burning blush shot over her pallid cheek, "But you—you know not all my shame. You know not that it *must be public*. I see you are shocked, greatly shocked. Did I not say, that even you would scorn to own me?"

'I am shocked, my love, I confess; but it is with the idea that your sufferings are not yet to have an end. Let us not talk more of this circumstance at present, permit me only to confide it to Mrs. Fielding, on whom you may rely for advice, and in whose tenderness you will find consolation.'

"To Mrs. Fielding! Alas, yes, it must be so—but yet—why, Harriet, after all that has befallen me, should false shame bring this cold sweat upon my forehead? But I will conquer it. Do I not deserve the censure I shall meet with? And why should I shrink from my deserts? Tell her, however—pray tell her, that I did not fall a prey to depraved inclination; that my judgment was perverted by argument, not seduced by flattery; and that when I yielded to the specious reasonings of my betrayer, I thought I was setting an example of high-souled virtue, which soared above the vulgar prejudices of the world. It is to vanity—yes, Harriet, I now see it is to vanity (though not the vanity of beauty) that I owe my ruin!"

Here she paused for a little, but Harriet only answering her by a sigh, she thus renewed the conversation. "My mind is still perplexed and bewildered. I have acted upon the sublimest principles of morality; I have been inspired by the most elevated sentiments of virtue. But virtue is happiness—and I am miserable! Is it owing to the prejudices of society that I am so?

Ah! no. My father!—my unhappy father!—Had my heart received no other wound, his death would have transfixed a dagger in its inmoſt core. But how has it been wounded by another hand! How cruelly torn! O Harriet! my ſufferings have been multiplied. I have paſſed through ſcenes which would freeze your ſoul with horror—but I dare not think of them. No, no, let me not think of them. I muſt avoid diſtraction--I--"

Harriet, perceiving the agitation of her mind, and fearful of its conſequences, tenderly interrupted her, and uſed every endeavour to ſoothe her into compoſure. Henry ſoon after came in, and while he made his enquiries after Julia's health, Harriet ſtepped down to Mrs. Fielding, who was below in the parlour. She there informed her of all that had paſſed in the late converſation. They then conſulted together on what was now to be done with the poor unfortunate, and as Harriet gave it as her opinion, that ſhe would not be prevailed upon to remove to Mrs. Fielding's houſe, it was agreed, that ſhe ſhould remain where ſhe was until the arrival of her mother, who was immediately to be ſent for. Mrs. Fielding then begged leave to wait upon her; Julia would have excuſed herſelf, on account of her being ſtill in bed; ſhe had attempted to riſe but had fainted in the attempt, and was adviſed by the Doctor not to get up till the evening, when he hoped ſhe would find herſelf reſtored to greater ſtrength. Mrs. Fielding waved the apology, and though her firſt appearance threw Julia (who conjectured the ſubject of her converſation with Harriet) into the deepeſt confuſion, the ſympathetic tenderneſs of her addreſs was ſo truly maternal, that it quickly re-aſſured her confidence, and reſtored her ſerenity.

The

The natural openneſs and candour of Julia's mind ſuggeſted the propriety of giving her friends a faithful relation of all that had befallen her; but neither ſtrength nor feelings were equal to the taſk. Mrs. Fielding and Harriet, perceiving that the bare recollection of ſome of theſe events was attended with a degree of horror that ſhook her tender frame, united their endeavours to recall her from the ſubject. They ſpoke of her health, and of the means neceſſary for its reſtoration; of theſe Mrs. Fielding mentioned country air as the moſt efficacious. She ſaid, ſhe had upon her eſtate in Hertfordſhire a charming cottage, where Mrs. Delmond and Julia might enjoy all the advantages of retirement, and remain as long as they pleaſed unnoticed and unknown. When convenient for them to quit it, if they choſe to remove to Ireland, ſhe had there ſome friends, to whom ſhe could introduce them in ſuch a manner as would procure their welcome reception into a very agreeable circle of ſociety.

"I underſtand your kind hint, my dear Madam," ſaid Julia, "I perfectly underſtand it; but you muſt not think me an ungrateful creature if I decline your generous offer. I would live—yes, it is now my wiſh to live, that by my future life I may make ſome amends for my paſt miſconduct. But I greatly fear I have, in a moment of deſpair, of heart-rending agony, ſhortened the period of my exiſtence. O that I could recal that moment! O that I may not have been a double murderer! My father! and my child! Nay, I pray you do not look upon me with ſuch horror! I cannot bear that look!" covering up her head with the bed clothes.

'Fear not the looks of us, thy frail fellow-

mortals,' rejoined Mrs. Fielding; 'to the Searcher of hearts thy humility and thy penitence will be acceptable. And shall we, who know not how little of our boasted virtue we can call our own—we, who are ignorant of the temptations that have assailed thee, dare to pronounce thy condemnation? No, my dear Miss Delmond; far other sentiments, believe me, at this moment inspire our breasts. But if you feel my presence too much for you, I will retire and leave you with your friend Miss Orwell, to whom you may safely unburthen every feeling of your heart.'

Again Julia lifted up her head, and pressing Mrs. Fielding's hand, which had kindly taken hold of her's, "Surely," said she, "there is a GOD, a Providence, a reward hereafter for goodness such as your's. But if there be a GOD, if there be an hereafter, what must my situation be?"

'That GOD, my dear, who in the things that are made hath not left himself without a witness, is, by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, revealed to us as a father and a friend. Surrounded as we are by the glorious proofs of a Supreme Intelligence, it is scarcely possible for a sane mind to doubt the existence of a GOD. But our peculiar happiness is to have our vague and imperfect ideas upon this subject cleared and explained by Him who brought life and immortality to light; our great master came into the world "not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might have life." He addressed not himself to the perfect. He professed not to call the "righteous (or those who proudly deemed themselves such) but sinners to repentance," and revealed to them the Almighty as a GOD of hope

and

and consolation. Do not then, my sweet girl, encourage the language of despair. Acquaint yourself with the promises of the Gospel, and when the world withdraws its consolations, these shall support your soul. I hope, however, that you have not—no, assuredly you have not, done any thing with a wilful intention of shortening your existence?'

"Oh! yes, yes! If there be guilt in seeking to fly from a miserable existence, I am guilty! In a moment of phrensy and desperation I swallowed poison, I hoped it would have rid me of a wretched being, and buried my woes in the dark abyss of annihilation; but no sooner had I done the dreadful deed, than Nature recoiled, and death, which had long been the only object of my wishes, appeared horrible to my view. Oh! how my soul then struggled within me! What palpitations, what terrors laid hold of my distracted mind! 'Twas then, that I first suspected the possibility of my having cherished false opinions; then that I first began to fear, that there *might* be reality in those I had been taught to despise. The conversations I had held with you, my Harriet, rushed upon my recollection; we had each of us acted upon the principles we had adopted; but, oh! how different was the result! These and a thousand other agonizing reflections tore my throbbing heart, while momentarily I expected its beating pulse to be arrested by the cold hand of death. In this I was disappointed; cold shiverings, indeed, came upon me, and a numbness, which has not yet left me, seized my limbs, but death came not. I fear, however, the consequences will still be fatal—if not to myself, to——"

Here she stopped, and Mrs. Fielding kindly

renewed thoſe ſoothing aſſurances of divine aid, and divine mercy, which, however lightly thought of in the gay hours of proſperity, are found a cordial to the ſinking heart.

Mrs. Fielding's zeal was not diſgraced by bigotry, nor was it inflamed by ſuperſtition; ſhe did not ſeek to overwhelm the already broken ſpirit by aggravating the colour of paſt offences; but rather made it her endeavour to re-aſſure her confidence in the poſſibility of future happineſs from future exertions of virtue.

It was her opinion, that the ſupport of reputation being found to be a ſtrong additional motive to virtue, it ought not to be put out of the power of the unfortunate female, who, conſcious of her error, is deſirous to retrieve it by her after conduct. On this account, in the next converſation ſhe held with Julia, ſhe was led again to propoſe the plan ſhe had ſuggeſted for her going firſt into the country, where ſhe could enjoy all the privacy her circumſtances required; and then removing to a ſituation, where the paſt incidents of her life might remain for ever buried in oblivion.

Julia liſtened to her propoſal with reſpectful attention, and then, though in faltering accents, with a look and manner that denoted the utmoſt firmneſs and compoſure, ſhe thus replied:—"I am fully, I am gratefully ſenſible of the goodneſs of your intention; your kind conſideration for my reputation is the ſuggeſtion of pure benevolence, and believe me, I feel it as I ought. Do not, therefore, my dear Madam, attribute to perverſeneſs or pride my oppoſition to your propoſal; but it is a ſubject on which I have deeply thought; on which I have fully made up my mind. If you will have the goodneſs to liſten

to

to my reaſons you will, I flatter myſelf, acknowledge the force of the arguments that have determined me."

Mrs. Fielding affectionately intreating her to ſpeak without reſerve, ſhe thus proceeded:—"The peculiar diſadvantages under which our ſex is doomed to labour, early appeared to me ſo enormous, that it made me liſten with avidity to the reveries of the new theoriſts, whoſe doctrines promiſed emancipation from the tyranny of prejudice; and ſeemed to offer the rights of equality to the hitherto degraded part of the human race. Independence I conſidered as eſſential to virtue. But what was the independence to which I had reſort? Alas! to throw off the gentle, the endearing reſtraints of parental authority for the yoke of a domineering paſſion, which bowed my ſoul in ſubjection to a man who has ſince proved the moſt barbarous and unworthy of the human race! In the height of my enthuſiaſm for the new doctrines I had embraced, I was intoxicated with the idea, that for me it was reſerved to point out to my ſex a new and nobler path to glory than the quiet duties of domeſtic life. To convince them, that equal to man in all the moſt noble qualities of the mind, we ought to ſcorn the meanneſs of confining our notions of virtue to one point; and that it was to our giving way to the prejudices of ſociety in this particular, we owed the degradation and miſery of our ſex. You, Madam, will wonder at my ſtrange deluſion, when I confeſs that I conſidered the loſs of my honour as a ſacrifice to principle, and that in this idea I ſtruggled to overcome the inſtinctive repugnance of that delicacy which Nature had implanted, and education cheriſhed, in my breaſt. I was taught to

glory in having aſſerted the prerogative of human nature in a free and independent choice; but when I expected the meed of fame, I was plunged into the depth of miſery, and goaded by the ſtings of remorſe. Alas! what idea can *words* convey of what I have ſuffered!—Robbed, betrayed, deſerted, by the man on whom my fooliſh heart reſted as a lover, counſellor, and friend! The cruel certainty of his unworthineſs would have been ſufficient to have made me miſerable for ever. But this, even this, was light to what I ſuffered, when in the den of demons, to which I was betrayed, I ſaw in an old newſpaper, put as a wrapper about ſome writing-paper, the account of my father's death. Then, indeed, the exceſs of horror ſeized my ſoul. The wretches that ſurrounded me were to me no longer objects of hate or terror. On myſelf, on my own guilty head all my execrations were poured. The viſeſt of the vile, compared with me, I thought was innocent. In the phrenſy of deſpair I endeavoured to eſcape exiſtence; but no ſooner had I ſwallowed the deadly potion, than the death I ſo ardently had wiſhed for became dreadful to my imagination. Oh! the ſtruggles of that moment! But they are not to be deſcribed. Bleſſed be GOD! that however dreadful, they were ſalutary. In the violence of the conflict the ſtrength of contending paſſions ſeemed to have been exhauſted. A ſort of gloomy tranquillity ſucceeded, which was not interrupted, ſave by my renewed apprehenſions of the wicked deſigns of the people of the vile houſe, where I knew myſelf to be a priſoner. Many were my plans for eſcape which accident had rendered abortive. At length, on the certainty that violence was intended me, and that the

wretched

wretched woman had actually received the price of my perſon from a man of ſeeming gravity, who, while he kept what is called a fair character in ſociety, and was himſelf the father of daughters, whoſe honour he would have protected with his life, would not have ſcrupled to gratify his own brutal paſſions at the expence of the temporal and eternal happineſs of a poor young creature deſtitute of all protection. I collected all the vigour of my mind, and determined to run every riſk, in order to effect my eſcape. Having taken my reſolution, I affected a degree of compoſure, and even of cheerfulneſs, that my deſign might be the leſs ſuſpected; and the moment that I found myſelf unobſerved, in purſuance of my plan, I haſtened up to the garret, got out of the window upon the leads, and as faſt as my benumbed limbs would permit, ſlowly crept upon my hands and knees along the different houſes, till I reached them at the end of the ſtreet. There I likewiſe found the garret-window open; with ſome difficulty I entered, and quickly ſhutting after me, retired into a corner, where leaning againſt the wall, I ſtood gaſping for breath, and trembling in every limb.

"A little kitten had, without my perceiving it, crept in at the half-open door. A boy of about four years old came in purſuit of it; but ſeeing me, ſcreamed and fled. New terrors then ſeized upon me, as I made no doubt he would alarm the family, and that I ſhould be treated as a thief, perhaps conſigned to the horrors of a priſon; but as no priſon was ſo dreadful in my eyes as that I had juſt quitted, I reſolved to bear my deſtiny with patience. Part of my apprehenſions were ſoon fulfilled. The miſtreſs of the houſe, followed by her maid-ſervant

and a lad of about fourteen, armed with a huge ſtick, came up to me, and almoſt in one voice demanded how I came there?

"I came hither for protection—for deliverance! O ſave me, dear Madam," ſaid I, dropping on my knees; "ſave me from death, and worſe than death!"

'Where did you come from?' ſaid the mother of the little boy, who now ventured to approach me.

I told her. She at firſt ſeemed to doubt my veracity, but did not heſitate (before her doubts on this head were removed) to aſſure me of temporary protection.

'Whether what you ſay be true or no,' ſaid ſhe, 'you are young, and evidently unfortunate. I have children of my own, and who knows what may yet befal them! So, poor thing, I will not betray you. Here, however, theſe wretches may ſoon trace you; and how can a poor widow defend you? I would therefore adviſe you to put yourſelf under the protection of a magiſtrate, who will put you in a way of returning to your friends.'

"Alas!" ſaid I, "I have no friends! Oh GOD! what will become of me!"

'Take courage, Miſs,' ſaid the ſervant-maid, taking my hand with an appearance of ſympathy for which my heart ſhall never ceaſe to be grateful, 'there is a refuge for you, a bleſſed refuge—*The Aſylum of the Deſtitute.* There I myſelf was ſaved from miſery and deſtruction. There you will be received, and treated with kindneſs and humanity; and if you appear to be a proper behaved perſon, will have every encouragement to continue in a virtuous courſe."

"Where," cried I, "oh, where is this bleſſed

bleſſed retreat? Let me fly to it inſtantly. I will do any thing, I will ſubmit to any thing—only to get permiſſion to live among the good and virtuous. I care not how humble, how lowly—for I am truly humbled."

I would inſtantly have ſet out, but the good people, obſerving how ill I was, propoſed my remaining there till the evening, and that in the mean time I ſhould take ſome refreſhment and repoſe; and much, indeed, did I ſtand in need of both. They ſupported me between them to a bed-chamber on the firſt floor; and there, by their advice, I was about to lay me down, when a loud knocking at the door called away both miſtreſs and maid, and threw me into freſh trepidation. I liſtened, and heard a man's voice. It was loud and terrible. A thief, he ſaid, had eſcaped from juſtice, and muſt have contrived to hide herſelf in ſome houſe on that ſide of the ſtreet; he therefore adviſed them to ſecure their doors, as if they permitted her to get off, they would be conſidered as acceſſaries in her crimes. I could not hear what reply was made by the miſtreſs of the houſe, and dreadful was the ſuſpence I remained in till ſhe returned to me. She came, but ſuſpicion was not in her looks.

'Alas! poor thing,' ſaid ſhe, 'you muſt depart from hence immediately. I have ſent Hannah for a coach, and in it ſhe ſhall conduct you to the Aſylum; for I believe, yes, I *do* believe you are innocent.'

I had no power to reply. She wrapped me in a long cloak, and put her own bonnet and veil upon my head, to conceal me from the people who might be watching for me in the ſtreet. I happily got into the coach without obſervation, and ſupported by the kind-hearted Hannah, reached

reached this bleſſed place in ſafety. Ah! how little did I then imagine who I was here to meet with! The agitation I had undergone, together with the want of food and ſleep, affected my brain; I was ſenſible that it was affected. One image took poſſeſſion of my mind—the image of my dying father. I conceived myſelf doomed to ſuffer as his murderer, and that all I had undergone, all I yet might have to undergo, was in expiation of this foul offence. Alas! the return of reaſon, though it enables me to methodiſe my thoughts, takes not from the bitterneſs of this reflection. But how have I wandered from the ſubject on which I deſigned to have explained myſelf! Forgive me, dear Madam, for I now fear I ſhall exhauſt your patience."

'Not my patience, dear Miſs Delmond, but your own ſtrength, is in danger of being exhauſted by the continuance of the converſation. If, however, you do not feel yourſelf too much fatigued, I ſhall be glad to hear the plan you intend to adopt, and the reaſons you have for thinking it preferable to mine; which was intended to ſave your character from obloquy, and to reſtore to ſociety one whoſe many virtues may ſtill eminently adorn it.'

"For your good intentions, I thank you—from my heart I thank you," replied Julia; "but low as I am now ſunk in my own eſtimation, ſenſible as I am of the faultineſs of my conduct, and humbled under the conſciouſneſs, as my ſoul truly is, I muſt ſhrink ſtill lower than I am, not to feel myſelf degraded by the practice of any ſpecies of impoſture. Whether the unrelenting laws of ſociety with regard to our ſex are founded in injuſtice or otherwiſe, is not for me to determine. Happy they who ſubmit without

without reluctance to their authority! But first to ſet them at defiance, and then under falſe pretences to ſhrink from the penalty, what is this but to add hypocriſy to preſumption—to add an unjuſtifiable (becauſe deliberate) crime to an error, which perhaps may receive ſome mitigation on the ſcore of human frailty? Forgive me, Madam, for ſpeaking in this manner on a ſubject you have evidently conſidered in a different light; but I know you are too generous to find fault with me for differing from you."

'Find fault with you, my dear!' ſaid Mrs. Fielding; 'no, I honour you in my heart for your noble ſentiments, ſo full of integrity and honour. I do not pretend to combat them, but in juſtification of myſelf ſhall only mention the motives that led to my propoſal. On unſullied character, not only our reception in ſociety, but our uſefulneſs in life depends. The woman who is ſuſpected of having made a falſe ſtep, but who, by aſſiduouſly concealing it, ſhews ſome regard for reputation, will ever meet with more indulgence from the world than ſhe, who by openly avowing it, ſeems to brave its cenſures. In the latter caſe ſhe becomes a mark for public ſcorn to point the finger at; all the virtues ſhe may poſſeſs are of no avail, or rather they are conſidered by the world, what certain dogmatiſts affirm of the virtues of the unregenerate, as ſo many *ſhining ſins*. Her diſhonour attaches not merely to herſelf alone, but extends to all with whom ſhe is connected. Should her future conduct be ever ſo circumſpect, nay ſhould it be ever ſo exemplary over thoſe of her own ſex who are moſt inclined to applaud it, the fetters of public opinion will ſtill exert a reſtraining influence, and very few will dare to own her. Men

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alone will presume to express for her any friendship; and thus thrown upon the protection of men, while her heart beats indignant at what she considers as injustice, who can answer for the consequences? From all these evils who would not wish to preserve a character so estimable? Have not your errors been already sufficiently expiated by your sufferings? Why then should you be lost to society at a period of life when you might enter it with every advantage? You are but yet in the very early morning of your life; by removing to another kingdom, you may in a manner recommence its course. Nor can the concealment of the past be properly termed imposition; that belongs to false pretences only, and I am convinced the conduct of your future life will vindicate the reality of your claim to respect and veneration."

Julia's languid eyes were suffused with tears of gratitude. "How generously do you endeavour to reconcile me to myself," she exclaimed; "but it cannot be. Hope of future happiness can never reanimate my heart. On me the sun of joy is set for ever. The only ray of peace or consolation that can ever shine upon me, must be from the approbation of my own mind, reverberated and confirmed by the approbation of those to whom it is fully known. Mortifying to me would be the applause, oh! very mortifying the expressions of esteem I might receive from strangers; who, if they knew the circumstances I must then labour to conceal, would spurn me from them with contempt. No, my dear Madam; my place in society I have forfeited; nor will I endeavour to regain it by clandestine means. I will not add to my transgression by relinquishing the duties I have still to perform. If I am

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the means of bringing a helpleſs being into the world under circumſtances the moſt deplorable, I will not defert it. Oh, no! Cruelly, very cruelly has it already been deſerted by one parent! and ſhall its mother, for the ſake of preſerving a falſe appearance to the world, act a part equally inhuman? Never! never! The infamy I have brought upon its innocent head I ſhall freely ſhare; and devote my future life to making it what recompence is in my power, for the inauſpicious circumſtances under which it is for ever doomed to labour." As ſhe thus ſpoke, her fine eyes regained a momentary luſtre, heightened by the vivid bluſh that gleamed on her pale cheek wet with tears.

Mrs. Fielding gazing on her as ſhe ſpoke, felt for her a degree of admiration mingled with pity and regret, that cauſed ſenſations too big for utterance. She folded her maternal arms round her, and preſſed her to her heart. 'You are, indeed you are, an admirable creature!' ſhe at length exclaimed. 'Your arguments make me aſhamed of the comparative meanneſs of my own ſentiments upon this ſubject; and approbation is too poor a word to expreſs the ſenſe I have of your magnanimity."

"Alas!" replied Julia, "how little am I deſerving of ſuch praiſe! Were all my tears, tears of penitence for paſt miſconduct, and did my heart poſſeſs ſufficient firmneſs to throw from its affections the man who has proved himſelf unworthy of its eſteem, then indeed I might boaſt ſome little portion of magnanimity. But ah! how feeble are the ſentiments of virtue, when they prove ſo ineffectual in ſubduing the ſtrength of an unhappy paſſion!"

"Let not this conſideration too much diſ-

courage

courage you,' ſaid Mrs. Fielding. The affections of love are much more warm and vivid than thoſe of friendſhip; and yet even in friendſhip, where it has been miſplaced, the heart is long, very long in receiving the conviction that is forced upon it by reaſon. Affection ſtill lingers in the boſom, even after eſteem has taken its everlaſting flight; nor does it finally forſake it, till the mind has experienced the moſt exquiſite degree of anguiſh in the conteſt. Still, where the love of virtue reigns, the love of its oppoſite will in the end be conquered. Take courage, then, my dear, and employ your mind, not ſo much in ruminating on the paſt, as informing plans for your future conduct."

The entrance of Harriet and Maria, who juſt then returned from an airing which Mrs. Fielding had prevailed on them to take, put an end to the converſation. A kind conteſt then took place between the two friends about which ſhould remain with Julia, who was at length called upon to determine it. Affectionately preſſing the hand of each, "Between two ſuch cordials," ſaid ſhe, "it is difficult for me to chooſe; but here is my phyſician, and to his deciſion I ſhall leave it."

Henry had come with the ſecret hope that Harriet would return to Hanover-ſquare with him and Mrs. Fielding. Since the arrival of Julia at the Aſylum, he had enjoyed little of Harriet's company, and his heart was deeply ſenſible of the privation; but when he met the eyes of Julia, and read in them the wiſh for Harriet's ſtay; when he reflected on their greater intimacy, which muſt afford to Julia the pleaſure of unreſerved confidence, he checked the prompt

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wish of selfishness, and declared that Harriet should remain.

And here, lest the reader should not be inclined to give to the conduct of Henry all the merit it deserves, we beg the favour of him to pause for a moment, and give a candid answer to the few following questions.

Pray, sir, have you ever been in love? If not, you may go on to the next chapter.

"You have." Well then, be so obliging as to say how often you have sacrificed the slightest gratification of passion to the calls of friendship or benevolence? Pray, how often have you disobeyed the dictates of selfishness, from the consideration of conferring pleasure on any individual of your acquaintance? What have you sacrificed to the interests even of the object of your passion? One selfish desire?

"No. Passion was too powerful."

Justly, then, may you appreciate the nobleness of Henry Sydney's heart; which, filled with a passion as strong and pure as ever warmed a human breast, was yet sufficiently capacious to have room for the sentiments of friendship, and the feelings of benevolence.

CHAP. XIV.

"A wrench from all we *love*, from all we *are*;
"A sun extinguish'd! a just-opening grave!
"And oh! the last, last what? (can words express?
"Thought reach?) the last, last *silence* of a friend."

IT is high time to return to Bridgetina, to whom, as the ostensible heroine of these memoirs, it is our duty to attend. The inauspicious career

career of her *quondam* friends, if it did not effect a ſudden change in her opinions, conſiderably damped the ardour of her zeal. Neither the reaſonings of Mr. Sydney or Mrs. Fielding were calculated for making a convert of one, who to a very limited underſtanding united an active imagination; but they were ſo unanſwerable that they abated the confidence of ſelf-conceit, and tempered her diſlike to the doctrines of Chriſtianity.

Though this were all that was expected by Mr. Sydney, it did not perfectly ſatisfy Mrs. Fielding. "It is very extraordinary," ſaid ſhe, in ſpeaking to Mr. Sydney on this ſubject, "it is very extraordinary that Miſs Botherim ſhould be ſo obſtinately blind, as not to perceive the ſhocking conſequences of the erroneous opinions ſhe has adopted. Does ſhe not ſee to what they have already led? How can ſhe refuſe aſſent to demonſtration ſo ſtrong, ſo full as that you have juſt now been delivering? And to what is ſhe thus wedded?—to a ſyſtem that annihilates every future hope, and reduces us to a level with the beaſts that periſh! I can no way account for ſuch obſtinacy of unbelief."

'My dear Madam,' replied Mr. Sydney, 'you do not ſufficiently attend to the nature of the human mind. Not to mention the tenaciouſneſs of pride, which naturally revolts at the acknowledgment of conviction, we muſt, I fear, make greater allowances than you ſeem inclined to do, for the ſtrength of early aſſociation. Among thoſe who were eye-witneſſes of the miracles of our Saviour, we are told that many doubted—of what? Not of the miracles, for theſe they do not appear to have attempted to deny. The unbelief of the Jewiſh ſceptics were by *their early prejudices* directed

rected to a different point; they acknowledged the miracle, but doubted whether it was of God, or proceeded from the power of ſome demon. In embuing the minds of our children with notions of religion, we too often repreſent to them not only the great and leading truths of revelation, but every minutia of our own peculiar tenets, as inſeparable links of one great chain, of which no one can be broken without deſtroying the whole. The early aſſociation which we thus create, is frequently productive of the moſt unhappy conſequences. By it a long range of outworks of unequal ſtrength are expoſed to the attack of the enemy, where, if one be found untenable, the whole muſt of courſe ſurrender. In converſing with Miſs Botherim, I have more than once had occaſion to remark the truth of the above obſervation. But let us not expect too much at once; time, her ripened judgment, reading, and obſervation, may effect a change in her mind of greater conſequence than a ſudden conviction could poſſibly produce.

Mrs. Fielding acquieſced in this opinion, and leaving Bridgetina's converſion to Mr. Sydney, and the means by him preſcribed, ſhe entirely occupied herſelf in the concerns of the more amiable and more unfortunate Julia.

Doctor Orwell and his youngeſt daughter were on the eve of ſetting out for London to attend Harriet's nuptials, when they received the account of Julia's re-appearance, which Doctor Orwell was begged to communicate to Mrs. Delmond. He did ſo, but found the poor lady in no ſituation for undertaking an immediate journey. Ever ſince her huſband's death a flow fever had preyed upon her conſtitution, which gradually increaſing, had at length brought her to the very brink of

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the grave. Till the elopement of Julia her mind had never experienced the dominion of a ſtrong emotion; ſhe was, therefore, unequal to its controul. Inceſſantly dwelling on the ingratitude of her daughter, who had been the object of her pride as much as of her affections, her grief was embittered by reſentment; which, from the taciturnity and reſerve of her temper, being denied a vent, preyed inwardly, and conſumed the vital flame. And here it is worthy of remark, that while Captain Delmond execrated the ſeducer, and his wife bitterly arraigned the conduct of the ſeduced, neither one or other ever once caſt a retroſpective glance upon what they themſelves had done. The aunt of Mrs. Delmond had been little leſs hurt by her conduct, than ſhe was by that of her daughter. But *her* reſentment ſhe had deemed unreaſonable and abſurd; ſo different is the allowance ſelf-love permits us to make for the feelings of others, and for our own!

Till informed by Doctor Orwell, Mrs. Delmond had not the moſt diſtant idea of Julia's being ſtill unmarried. The intelligence aggravated the feelings of reſentment and deſpair. And after a ſilence, occaſioned by the exceſs of agitation, ſhe broke out into the bittereſt reproaches, not only againſt Julia, but againſt all who ſhould receive or countenance her. In vain did Doctor Orwell preach up to her the doctrine of chriſtian charity and forgiveneſs. She told him, that if he gave ſuch encouragement to wickedneſs, we thought his own children would do well to put his charity to the proof; and concluded by declaring, that were ſhe even able to undertake the journey, nothing ſhould induce her to go to ſee a wretch, whoſe infamous conduct had brought diſgrace on all connected with her.

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After having exhauſted her ſtrength by venting the feelings of reſentment, ſhe apparently ſunk into her uſual ſtate of torpid apathy. But it was only in appearance, for a variety of contending emotions continued to ſtruggle in her breaſt; where, though grief, anger, and reſentment were firſt in place, they could not overcome the yearnings of the mother in her heart. The ſtruggle was too much for her weak frame to ſupport, and an increaſe of fever was the fatal conſequence. Dr. Orwell was no ſooner informed by Mr. Gubbles of her danger, than he diſpatched a meſſenger for the neareſt phyſician; but ere he could arrive Mrs. Delmond was no more.

Having given the neceſſary directions for the interment, the Doctor was urged by his daughter Marianne to ſet out immediately on their intended journey, as they would now have little enough time to reach London before the wedding.

"You are miſtaken, my dear," ſaid Dr. Orwell, "ſo much muſt the news of this event add to the miſery of the wretched Julia, and ſo much will ſhe now require the ſoothing ſupport of friendſhip, that I know not Harriet's heart, if it have not the generoſity to defer her own happineſs, in order to alleviate the preſſure of another's anguiſh. There is no fear, therefore, of our not being in time to the wedding; but to gratify you, we ſhall ſet out to-morrow."

They accordingly did ſet out, and arrived at Mrs. Fielding's the evening of the following day. There they found only ſervants to receive them, and from them they learned, that Mrs. Fielding and her gueſts had ſpent the greater part of the day at the Aſylum, from whence they were not yet returned. Thither Dr. Orwell, after committing

mitting Marianne to the care of Mrs. Fielding's houſekeeper, directly drove.

He was ſhewn into a ſmall parlour, where the firſt object that ſtruck his eye was old Quinten, leaning againſt the window, and with the hand that preſſed upon his forehead covering his eyes, ſo that he did not perceive the Doctor's approach.

"Quinten!" cried Dr. Orwell, "is it you? How came you here? I did not know you had left W——."

'Ah! ſir,' ſaid Quinten, 'could I hear that my maſter's daughter was ill, and in diſtreſs, and not come to offer her my poor ſervices? Suſan no ſooner told me of the news you had brought my miſtreſs, which, by reaſon of her being in the next room, ſhe could not avoid hearing, than I begged her leave to march, and ſet out that very Thurſday evening; though ſhe did not ſeem overpleaſed at my coming, I know ſhe will thank me afterwards, when—'

"You do not then know that Mrs. Delmond is dead?" ſaid Doctor Orwell, interrupting him.

'My miſtreſs dead?' exclaimed Quinten. 'Oh! that is heavy news indeed! But Miſs Julia will never hear it! Oh! no. She will never know that her mother died without forgiving her; but God will be more merciful. He will receive the penitent to his boſom, and the dear child ſhall be an angel of light in heaven!'

"Is Miſs Delmond then ſo very ill?" aſked Doctor Orwell.

'Ill, indeed,' replied Quinten. 'But here is Miſs Orwell, and ſhe will tell you all.'

Quinten then retired, while Harriet, ruſhing into the room, threw her arms round her father's neck, and wept and ſobbed aloud upon his boſom.

"Be calm, my love," ſaid Dr. Orwell, "my darling

darling child! How ſhould I bow in gratitude to that Providence whoſe grace has been ſo liberally beſtowed upon you; every action of your life endears you ſtill further to my heart." Then fondly kiſſing her, he wiped away the tears that ſtill continued to flow from her eyes, and again begged her to be compoſed. "I am afraid to aſk for Julia," ſaid he; "from your tears I fear it is all over."

'No,' replied Harriet, 'ſhe yet lives, but that is all that can now be ſaid. The night before laſt ſhe was ſeized with ſpaſms and other ſymptoms, which the Doctor immediately pronounced fatal. Since then ſhe has ſuffered the extreme of pain; but ſuffered with a patience, a meekneſs, and reſignation, that deſerve a higher term than fortitude, for fortitude is ſometimes the effort of deſpair. Her's is the effect of ſincere penitence, and lively hope in the mercies of God through that Saviour to whom ſhe has been brought, effectually, I truſt, brought through ſufferings. But you muſt ſee her. I can place you where you will be unperceived, for the ſight of you would make her, perhaps, renew her enquiries concerning her mother, and ſhe knows nothing of her death. It would be cruel to diſturb her laſt moments by the intelligence.' So ſaying, ſhe took her father's hand, and ſilently led him into Julia's room.

Accuſtomed as Doctor Orwell was to the ſight of a death-bed, he never without awe could approach the ſolemn ſcene,

"Where darkneſs brooding o'er unfiniſh'd fate,
"With raven wing incumbent, waits the hour,
"Dread hour! that interdicts all future change."

But never were his feelings more ſenſibly impreſſed than on the preſent occaſion. The firſt object that preſented itſelf was old Mr. Sydney, ſitting

ſitting in an arm-chair by the bedſide, his hands claſped, and his eyes directed towards Heaven in mental prayer, while a few unbidden tears ſtole down his venerable cheeks. Mr. Churchill knelt by the bed, and preſſed one of the cold hands of the dying Julia between both of his; while Maria, ſitting behind her on the bed, ſupported in her arms her feeble frame. She was ſtill addreſſing herſelf to Mr. Churchill, but in a voice too low and broken to be diſtinctly heard. To what ſhe ſaid Churchill was too much affected to permit him to make any other reply than by kiſſing her hand, and bathing it with his tears. After a ſhort pauſe—"Heaven will, in this dear virtuous girl," ſaid ſhe, attempting to join Maria's hand to his, "amply reward you for your goodneſs. She too will act the part of a child to my poor mother—alas! a more deſerving child than I have been towards her! Oh, that I could recall the paſt! But it cannot be. Penitence is all I now can offer—and that I hope GOD and ſhe will accept of. Farewell, ſir! may GOD reward you for your goodneſs to my mother! He only can."

Again Churchill kiſſed her hand with emphatic tenderneſs, and covering his face with his handkerchief, haſtily withdrew to give vent to the feelings he could not controul. Maria's eyes followed him to the door with looks of tender ſympathy, which ſeemed eager to expreſs how much his ſenſibility endeared him to her heart.

Julia obſerved her looks, and tenderly taking her hand, "You will be happy, dear Maria," ſaid ſhe, "and you deſerve to be ſo. Harriet too, my dear Harriet, ſhe will be happy with her worthy Sydney; doubly happy even here, for having kept conſtantly in view the happineſs of hereafter. Where is Miſs Bothetim? I think I have

I have now ſtrength to ſpeak to her, and it may not be ſo long. I ſhould like now to ſee her."

Harriet inſtantly went out, and returned leading in Bridgetina, who ſeemed to enter with ſome reluctance. She appeared pale and frightened, and ſeemed to dread the ſolemnity of a dying ſcene—a ſcene ſhe had never yet witneſſed. 'You muſt come near her,' ſaid Harriet, as ſhe drew Bridgetina on; 'it would diſtreſs her too much to ſpeak to you at this diſtance.'

Julia attempted to hold out her feeble hand as ſhe approached her, which Bridgetina took in her's without ſpeaking.

"You tremble, my dear!" ſaid Julia. "Does it then ſo greatly ſhock you to ſee me thus? Ah, Bridgetina! could I indeed impreſs you with a ſenſe of what my mind now feels, I ſhould not die in vain. You ſee me now on the threſhold of eternity—that eternity, of which we have made a jeſt, but which we muſt acknowledge was never by any argument to a certainty diſproved; improbable we were taught to believe it, but impoſſible by mere man it could never be pronounced. I am now convinced, oh! thoroughly convinced, of its awful truth. I believe that I ſhall, ere the lapſe of many hours, appear before the throne of God! that God whoſe will I have deſpiſed, whoſe providence I have arraigned, nay, whoſe very being I have dared to deny! Bleſſed be his mercy, that did not leave me to periſh in my iniquity!"

After a pauſe, occaſioned by want of breath, ſhe thus proceeded. "You believe Jeſus Chriſt to have been a moraliſt and philoſopher. Examine, I beſeech you, the morality he preached, and you will acknowledge that its teacher could not lay the foundation of ſuch a ſyſtem in im-

poſture. Well did he ſay of future teachers, *By their fruits ye ſhall know them.*" What, my Bridgetina, are the fruits of the doctrines we have ſo unhappily been led to embrace? *In me you behold them!* In vain will you exclaim, in the jargon to which we have been accuſtomed, againſt the *prejudices of ſociety*, as if to them were owing the load of miſery that ſinks me to a premature grave. Ah! no. Thoſe prejudices, againſt which we have been accuſtomed ſo bitterly to rail, I now behold as a ſalutary fence, which, if I had never dared to overleap, would have ſecured my peace. Were thoſe barriers broken down, and every woman encouraged by the ſuffrage of univerſal applauſe to act as I have acted, fatal, my dear Bridgetina, very fatal to ſociety, would be the conſequence! In my friends here, theſe dear friends whom Heaven has in mercy ſent as miniſtring angels to ſmooth the path of death, ſee the fruits of a firm adherence to the doctrines we have deſpiſed! If, like them, I had been taught to devote the actions of every day to my GOD; and inſtead of encouraging a gloomy and querulous diſcontent againſt the preſent order of things, had employed myſelf in a vigilant performance of the duties of my ſituation, and a ſcrupulous government of my own heart and inclinations, how very different would my ſituation now have been! Think of theſe things, Bridgetina; and if ever you ſhould meet with——but I will not diſturb the ſerenity of my ſoul by mentioning his name.—Yet why? I carry not with me any reſentments to the grave. Tell Vallaton, then, that as a chriſtian I forgive him, and pray GOD to turn his heart. If mine had been fortified by principle, he never could have ſeduced it by his ſophiſtry.

ſophiſtry. No. It was not he, it was my own pride, my own vanity, my own preſumption, that were the real ſeducers that undid me. My ſtrength fails. Farewell, my poor Biddy! Nay, do not weep ſo much. I have now hopes of happineſs more ſweet, more precious, than aught the world can beſtow! Go home to your mother, my Biddy; and in the ſober duties of life forget the idle vagaries which our diſtempered brains dignified with the name of philoſophy."

Bridgetina weeping withdrew.

Julia, exhauſted by ſpeaking, reclined her head on Maria's boſom, and remained for ſome minutes ſilent. She then with a quick motion raiſed her head, and looked around the room. "Who is now here?" ſaid ſhe. "Methinks I do not ſee diſtinctly. This I know is Harriet's hand. Dear Harriet, oh, when you draw near the cloſe of your life, may the remembrance of the comfort you have beſtowed on me be a fund of joy and conſolation to your heart! My ſweet inſtructor, my monitreſs, my guide to the path of ſalvation, how ſhall I thank you? Your Sydney too I would thank. How much have I been indebted to his friendly attention! Let me join your hands, that with my dying lips I may bleſs you both."

While Henry and Harriet knelt in ſilent ſorrow by the ſide of the bed, endeavouring as much as poſſible to ſuppreſs their feelings, in order to catch every word that fell from Julia, a loud groan was heard from the oppoſite ſide of the room. Julia inſtantly caught the ſound. "It is honeſt Quinten," ſaid ſhe, "let him come near me. Do not, my good Quinten, do not grieve for me thus. God has for me ordered all

things graciously—I rejoice in his decrees. Death has now for me no terrors."

'O that I should have lived to see this day!' sobbed the old soldier. 'Would to God I could die for thee, my dear young lady! But surely there is yet hope. So young as you are—so very young!'

"Death is no respector of persons, my good Quinten! you may yet see many younger than me laid in their graves. Return to my poor mother, and continue to be attentive to her. She has been ill; do not wound her by the excess of your sorrow. I know my death will grieve her; but tell her, I beg she would consider it as a blessing."

'This is too much!' cried Quinten, 'I cannot, cannot stand it.' Then striking his hand upon his furrowed brow, he turned away to conceal the anguish of his heart. On a slight motion made by Mrs. Fielding he lifted up his eyes, and beheld the lifeless head of Julia sunk upon Maria's bosom.

A silence, more expressive than the loudest lamentations of clamorous sorrow, closed the solemn scene.

Maria continued still to clasp in her arms the inanimate form of her lovely friend, lovely even in death; and leaning over her, bedewed the pale face with her fast-falling tears. Henry and Harriet still knelt by the bedside, and continued to press the hand whose last office had been uniting theirs. While the old domestic, the venerable Quinten, wringing his hands in silent anguish gazed upon the corpse, and seemed insensible of the tears which coursed each other down his hard and weather-beaten face. Mrs. Fielding, who sat by the bedside, assisting and supporting

ſupporting Maria, made an effort to ſpeak, but could not. Doctor Orwell was the firſt who broke the emphatic ſilence. "It is enough, my children," ſaid he, "all is now over. The ſolemn ſcene is now cloſed—happily cloſed, I truſt in GOD, for the dead; and uſeful for us who are of the living, if we have grace *to lay it to heart.*

CONCLUSION.

"Domeſtic Happineſs, thou only bliſs
"Of paradiſe that has ſurvived the fall!
"Though few now taſte thee unimpaired and pure;
"Or taſting, long enjoy thee—too infirm,
"Or too incautious, to preſerve thy ſweets
"Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect,
"Or temper, ſheds into thy cryſtal cup.
"*Thou art the nurſe of virtue.*"

COWPER.

THE ſerious part of our readers may, perhaps, be of opinion, that with the laſt chapter our hiſtory ought properly to have concluded; as whatever we now can add muſt tend to deſtroy the impreſſion it was calculated to produce. It may be ſo. But how could we have the heart to diſappoint the Miſſes, by cloſing our narrative without a wedding? A novel without a wedding, is like a tragedy without murder, which no Britiſh audience could ever be brought to reliſh. A wedding, a double wedding, we ſhall with pleaſure and alacrity announce; but from us our fair readers muſt not expect too much. Willing as we are to oblige them, we cannot poſſibly contrive to marry every individual of our *dramatis perſonæ* in the laſt ſcene.

"And pray, why not?" exclaims a pretty

critic. "All the young ones at leaſt, you muſt certainly provide for; it it not always done?"

'Yes,' cries another, 'to be ſure it is; and nothing ſhould have tempted me to wade through the book, but to ſee who Bridgetina was to have at the laſt. Had I thought ſhe was to have remained unmarried after all, I give you my word I ſhould never have read three pages.'

"Nor I," repeats a third; "and during the half of the laſt volume, I have been doing nothing in thinking whether Mr. Vallaton or Mr. Myope was to be the happy man. Vallaton is a ſad wretch, to be ſure; but then he might have been made to *reform all at once*; nothing is *ſo* common; and who, except this ſtupid author, but would have made him out to be the ſon of ſome great Lord?"

"If Bridgetina can't have him," cries the other, 'ſhe ſurely may have Myope at leaſt. His poverty is no obſtacle; for what ſo eaſy, as to make him have ſome rich uncle come home from the Eaſt-Indies, or to give him a prize in the lottery; or—oh, there are a thouſand ways of giving him a fortune in a moment; and if Bridgetina be not married either to him or Vallaton, I ſhall be out of all patience.'

"And I," rejoins another fair judge, "ſhall condemn the book without mercy, if Mrs. Fielding be not married to her old lover Mr. Sydney. It muſt be ſo, to be ſure. After being in love with each other for thirty years, it would be *ſo* romantic! and they muſt of courſe be *ſo* happy! As for Henry and Harriet, there is nothing intereſting in their ſtory. Such matches take place every day. Had they married to live in a cottage upon love, or had they been raiſed to all the ſplendour of the high ton, it might have been

been charming either way. But to give them competence in middle life is quite a bore, and shews the author to be a mere quiz. Churchill and Maria, too, are tame creatures. What woman of spirit would put up with being a man's *second love?* When I marry—"

Stay, dear young lady. Make no rash promises; and till experience have convinced you that romantic passion is the only true foundation for matrimonial felicity, do not condemn the conduct of Maria Sydney. To the observations of your sister critics we shall reply in order, and obviate (as much as it is in our power to obviate) the force of their objections.

First, then, with regard to the disposal of our heroine. We are very sorry to confess that she is still unmarried. But this is far from being our fault; and if you will have the goodness to recollect that she is neither *rich* nor *handsome*, it will cease to appear so very extraordinary. Mr. Vallaton might, it is true, have been reformed for her, as you propose; he might, likewise, for aught we know, have been recognized as the offspring of some noble Lord, had it not unfortunately happened, that before either of these events could take place, a period was put to his existence by the perfidious contrivance of the very woman for whose sake he had robbed and abandoned the unfortunate Julia. This wretched woman, whose principles Vallaton had made it his boast to form, had the art so far to insinuate herself into his affections, as to reign absolute mistress of his heart. His passion for Julia gave but a short-lived interruption to her authority. Though the beauty of Julia excited his admiration, his heart was too depraved to feel the full force of her charms. The delicacy of her pure and uncorrupted mind laid him under a restraint so disagreeable, that

had

had not the power over her fortune been attached to the poſſeſſion of her perſon, he would ſoon have deſiſted from the purſuit. Nor when ſucceſs had crowned his arts, did the tender affection of Julia touch his ſoul. The mind and manners of the profligate Emmeline were ſo much more congenial to his own, that he found her converſation a relief from the inſipid innocence of Julia's; and though in perſonal attractions there could be no compariſon made between them, he preferred to youth, modeſty, and beauty, the ſophiſticated blandiſhments of a time-worn wanton. So perverſe is the taſte of ſenſual depravity! which, in the well-known language of our immortal bard,

"Though to a radiant angel link'd,
"Will prey on garbage."

With a degree of art beyond the conception even of the artful Vallaton, did this infamous woman employ the influence ſhe had obtained to his deſtruction. At her inſtigation he took Julia to the houſe from which ſhe ſo fortunately eſcaped to Mrs. Fielding's Aſylum; and as the wickedneſs of even the worſt of men ſeldom equals the wickedneſs of woman, it was by her contrivance that Julia was there robbed of the ſum he had intended to leave her for the ſupply of her immediate exigencies. The plan of their elopement to France was likewiſe her's, and the execution of it ſhe contrived to accelerate by the introduction of a pretended friend from that kingdom, who appeared as a private agent for the ſale of the confiſcated eſtates of the ex-nobles; and who fired the avarice of Vallaton by the deſcription of a ſeigniory which he offered him upon terms ſo advantageous that it would

would have been folly to let ſlip the opportunity of ſo highly advancing his fortune.

On arriving at Paris, where the purchaſe was to be compleated, ſome obſtacles occurred of which the London agent had not been ſufficiently aware; hopes were however given that theſe might be overcome, and the negociation was ſtill going forward, when Vallaton was arreſted as a ſpy and agent of the royaliſts. It was not till after his trial and condemnation that he diſcovered the name of his accuſer, or the nature of the evidence on which he had been condemned. Sharper than the inſtrument of death was the anguiſh that pierced him, when made ſenſible that he had been betrayed by the wretched partner of his guilt. On his way to the ſcaffold he gave vent to his rage by curſes and imprecations, which he continued to pour forth till the laſt minute drew on. He then pauſed, and by the expreſſion of his countenance ſeemed to caſt a retroſpective glance on the events of his paſt life. A convulſive groan of horror and deſpair then burſt from his agitated boſom; he ſtarted from the graſp of the executioner, but after a ſhort and ineffectual ſtruggle was forced to ſubmit to the fatal blow.

To offer any comment upon the circumſtances of this cataſtrophe would be impertinent. As we do not preſume to imagine, far leſs to take it for granted, that our readers are leſs capable of reflection than we are ourſelves, we ſhall not trouble them with obvious deductions from the circumſtances we relate; but content ourſelves with having fully explained the reaſons that rendered it impoſſible for us to gratify our fair readers by making up a match between Mr. Vallaton and our heroine Bridgetina.

Why

Why Mr. Myope did not marry her is, perhaps, not quite so easily solved. He might, indeed, as has very properly been observed, have made an excellent husband for her; but it unfortunately so happened, that having *no* rich uncle coming home from abroad, and having got *no* prize in the lottery, and having moreover become acquainted with a rich widow, (a disciple of Swedenburg's, by whom he was made a convert to the New Jerusalem faith) he sealed his conversion by uniting himself to his instructress; and is now employed in writing a quarto volume to prove the possibility of an intercourse with the world of spirits. He has already had some admirable visions; but Bridgetina, though much inclined to adopt his new opinions, has not yet been so highly favoured. She continues to live with her mother, and notwithstanding the dissimilarity of their pursuits, begins to find that the consciousness of contributing to the happiness of a parent is a *pleasurable sensation*.

As for Mrs. Fielding, we shall in her own words explain to you her reasons for declining an union with Mr. Sydney, when proposed to her by some friends, who knew the length and sincerity of their mutual attachment.

"It is observed by Solomon," said Mrs Fielding, 'that *there a time for all things*,' among the rest '*a time to marry*.' This *time* is surely not in the autumn of life when the habits are formed, and the mind has lost that ductility which renders it capable of yielding to, and even of coalescing with, the humours of its partner. Without solid and mutual esteem, no marriage can be happy. The love that has it not for its basis, is, as Solomon observes of the laughter of fools, '*like the crackling of thorns*;' a blaze that is soon extinguished.

extinguiſhed. But cold eſteem is not ſufficient. Love too muſt lend its aid; and what can be more ridiculous than a Cupid in wrinkles! No, no, my friends; I ſhall not ſo expoſe myſelf. I ſtill feel for Mr. Sydney the moſt lively affection, but it is not the affection that would now lead me to become his wife. From the day I heard of his marriage, I have devoted myſelf to a ſingle life. I have endeavoured to create to myſelf objects of intereſt that might occupy my attention, and engage my affections. Theſe I have found in the large family of the unfortunate. My plan has been ſucceſsful in bringing peace to my boſom; and peace is the happineſs of age—it is all the happineſs of which on this ſide the grave I ſhall be ſolicitous."

Such was the deciſion of Mrs. Fielding, which no intreaty could prevail on her to alter. To our fair readers we ſhall leave it to pronounce upon its propriety.

In the affectionate and endearing attention of her children (for ſo ſhe calls Henry Sydney and his wife) ſhe receives as great ſatisfaction as ever parent experienced. She is a daily witneſs of their happineſs, and perhaps, in the conſciouſneſs of having been inſtrumental inpromoting it, experiences a happineſs that is little inferior.

Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, (who reſide great part of the year in the country) though they could not prevail upon Mr. Sydney to relinquiſh his houſe at W——, or give up the paternal care of his little flock, enjoy a great deal of his company, and have the pleaſure, by a thouſand tender attentions, of increaſing his comfort, and augmenting his felicity. In their journies to town, where Mr. Churchill is obliged to ſpend a part

a part of every winter, they have hitherto prevailed on Mr. Sydney to accompany them; and that he may have an additional inducement for continuing to do so, Mr. Churchill has fitted up a small museum of natural history, which it is the old gentleman's delightful business to fill with the choicest specimens. The museum has, however, of late occupied a less share of his attention than formerly. Since the little Maria Churchill has been able to lisp the name of *grand-papa*, and Harry Sydney to climb upon his knee, the beetles and butterflies have been frequently neglected; nor is it a slight gratification to the smiling parents to perceive how much the endearing caresses of his little favourites gain upon his heart.

"Oh speak the joy, ye whom the sudden tear
"Surprises often, while ye look around,
"And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,
"All various nature pressing on the heart;
"An elegant sufficiency, content,
"Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
"Ease, and alternate labour, useful life,
"Progressive virtue, and approving Heav'n!
"These are the matchless joys of virtuous love,
"And thus their moments fly. The seasons, thus
"As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
"Still find them happy—"

Happy even in "*this corrupt wilderness of human society*," where any degree of happiness is, in the dark and gloomy dogmas of modern philosophy, represented as impossible. Impossible, however, it never will be found by those who seek for it in the right path of regulated desires, social affections, active benevolence, humility, sincerity, and a lively dependence on the Divine favour and protection.

"What cause for triumph, where such ills abound?
"What for dejection, where presides a Pow'r
"Who call'd us into being—*to be blest?*"

FINIS.